PUBLIC
S.F.
LIBRARY

BOOK NO.
812 K384m

ACCESSION
324305

Form 16 30M 8-31

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY

3 1223 03748 7114

SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY

Careful usage of books is expected, and any injury or loss is to be paid for by the borrower. A charge of two cents will be made for each day, or fraction thereof, that this book is kept overtime.

SEE DATE WHEN DUE BELOW

Nov9'32

Dec2'32

Report change of address promptly.

Form 11—100M-6-31

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/mrspartridgepres0000mary

Mrs. Partridge Presents

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY

MARY KENNEDY
AND
RUTH HAWTHORNE

COPYRIGHT, 1924, BY MARY KENNEDY AND RUTH HAWTHORNE
COPYRIGHT, 1925, BY MARY KENNEDY AND RUTH HAWTHORNE

All Rights Reserved

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that "MRS. PARTRIDGE PRESENTS," being fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States, the British Empire, including the Dominion of Canada, and all countries subscribing to the Berne Convention, is subject to a royalty, and anyone presenting the play without the consent of the authors or owners or their authorized agents will be liable to the penalties by law provided. The amateur acting rights of this play are strictly reserved and amateur performances may not be given anywhere without permission first having been obtained in writing from SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

NEW YORK
SAMUEL FRENCH
PUBLISHER
25 WEST 45TH STREET

LONDON
SAMUEL FRENCH, LTD.
26 SOUTHAMPTON STREET
STRAND

812
K384m
324805

"Mrs. Partridge Presents"

All Rights Reserved

Especial notice should be taken that the possession of this book without a valid contract for production first having been obtained from the publisher, confers no right or license to professionals or amateurs to produce the play publicly or in private for gain or charity.

In its present form this play is dedicated to the reading public only, and no performance, representation, production, recitation, public reading, or radio broadcasting may be given except by special arrangement with Samuel French, 25 West 45th Street, New York.

Royalty quoted on application to Samuel French, 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y.

Whenever the play is produced by amateurs the following notice must appear on all programs, printing and advertising for the play: "Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French of New York."

Attention is called to the penalty provided by law for any infringement of the author's rights, as follows:

"SECTION 4966:—Any person publicly performing or representing any dramatic or musical composition for which copyright has been obtained, without the consent of the proprietor of said dramatic or musical composition, or his heirs and assigns, shall be liable for damages thereof, such damages in all cases to be assessed at such sum, not less than one hundred dollars for the first and fifty dollars for every subsequent performance, as to the court shall appear to be just. If the unlawful performance and representation be wilful and for profit, such person or persons shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction shall be imprisoned for a period not exceeding one year."—U. S. Revised Statutes: Title 60, Chap 3.

The following is a copy of the playbill of the first performance of "MRS. PARTRIDGE PRESENTS," as produced at the Belmont Theatre, New York, Monday, January 5th, 1925:

GUTHRIE McCLINTIC

Presents

BLANCHE BATES

In

"MRS. PARTRIDGE PRESENTS"

A Comedy in Three Acts

BY

MARY KENNEDY AND RUTH HAWTHORNE

ELLEN	*Augusta Haviland*
PHILIP PARTRIDGE	*Edward Emery, Jr.*
DELIGHT PARTRIDGE	*Sylvia Field*
STEPHEN APPLEGATE	*Charles Waldron*
MAISIE PARTRIDGE	*Blanche Bates*
KATHERINE EVERETT	*Ruth Gordon*
SYDNEY ARMSTEAD	*Elliot Cabot*
CHARLES LUDLOW	*C. Haviland Chappell*
CLEMENTINE	*Elaine Ivans*
MISS HAMILTON	*Virginia Chauvenet*
PETE	*William Worthington*
SAM	*Edwin H. Morse*
MADAME LA FLEUR	*Miss Anne Tonetti*

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I. *Living-room of Maisie Partridge's home.*

ACT II. *The same.*
The following April.

ACT III. *The Hat Shop.*
A week later.

TIME: *The present.*

Mrs. Partridge Presents

ACT I

SCENE: *Living room of* MAISIE PARTRIDGE'S *home. The curtain rises on the living room of an apartment near Washington Square, which is the home of* MAISIE PARTRIDGE, *the fashionable modiste. It has some old furniture, good color, and a few smart touches. An arch left leads into a hall; off which is the outside door, above; and one which leads into the rest of the house down stage.*

Upper center is a fireplace and couch. At R., *large windows, where a boy,* PHILIP PARTRIDGE, *is discovered bending over a drawing board. He is working with charcoal on large sheets of white drawing paper, many of which are scattered over the floor.* ELLEN, *the housekeeper, a pleasant Irish woman of forty, enters the room with a vase of flowers.*

ELLEN. *(Crosses* U.C.*)* I'm not one of those that holds with that there Godwin theory, are you, Mr. Philip? *(Set flowers on stand* L. *of fireplace.)*

PHILIP. *(Seated* U.R.*—Absently)* Say not. What theory is that?

ELLEN. *(Lowering her voice)* You know—about the monkeys.

PHILIP. Ellen! You have been reading Gertrude

Atherton. You shouldn't have to think of these things for years and years.

ELLEN. *(Crosses to sofa)* It just come to me seeing you sitting there with your face screwed up over them drawings. I said to myself, "there may be something in it"—and as for some old Irish people *I've* seen, Mr. Philip, they just is monkeys!

READY PHONE.

PHILIP. Oh, you mean Mr. Darwin.

ELLEN. No, I don't. I've never seen him. Does he look like one?

PHILIP. Ellen, would you hold up your arm? *(She does so—right arm.)* Draw up your sleeve. *(She does so.)* Pull in your elbow and throw out your wrist.

ELLEN. It ain't humanly possible.

PHILIP. Of course it is. You are looking at a rose. *(*ELLEN *stands in position with a winning smile.)* Thanks.

ELLEN. *(Holding the pose)* Art certainly does run in families. Take your mother's dress-making business. Many is the time I have let the roast burn while she pinned me up in yards of satin so stiff it could stand alone. Um-um. How we worked to make both ends meet.

PHILIP. Raise that arm a little.

ELLEN. Huh! Now she gets ten times as much for a skimpy little thing of flimsy stuff I wouldn't be caught dead in! *(Phone. Pause.)* What must I do, Mr. Philip? Shall I hold the pose, or answer the phone?

PHILIP. Answer it, I'm through.

ELLEN. *(Crosses to* L. *of table, takes up phone)* Hello. No, sir, she isn't. What? She isn't up yet. Yes. Who is it? Who's dead? Oh, that's your name. I beg your pardon. Good-bye. *(Hangs up phone. Crosses to desk.)*

PHILIP. Ellen, did you know you can get fifty cents an hour for that at the Art School?

ELLEN. What for? *(Sits at desk and writes on pad.)* Answering the telephone? Well, it's worth it.

PHILIP. No, for posing.

ELLEN. For holding up my arms like that, or standing on one foot, the way I was Friday? I'd die of the cramps. *(Rises and crosses to arch.)* It is after eleven. Do you think I could give Miss Delight her breakfast? And get it over with?

PHILIP. Why not?

ELLEN. Well, Mrs. Partridge said she rehearsed until a late hour, and for me not to wake her. But Miss Delight told me expressly she had plans for today.

PHILIP. Use your own judgment, Ellen; you always do.

ELLEN. I'll go fix her tray. And Mr. Philip, couldn't you whistle a little tune—so she could wake up natural?

PHILIP. I'll help you out. *(Raises his voice.)*

ELLEN. Oh, thank you, Mr. Philip. *(She goes off.)*

PHILIP. Delight! *(Pause.)* Delight! *(*DELIGHT, *a little sleepy, clad in a lovely kimona, dashes on, and goes to the telephone* U.C. *Sits on sofa.)*

DELIGHT. Hello! Hello!

PHILIP. Hello yourself.

DELIGHT. Oh, they've gone! *(Hangs up.)*

PHILIP. What a shame. Well, they'll call again.

DELIGHT. *(Rises)* Do you know who it was? *(Sits up on sofa.)*

PHILIP. Who what was?

DELIGHT. On the telephone for me.

PHILIP. I didn't hear it ring.

DELIGHT. Well, what did you call me for?

PHILIP. I? I didn't call you.

DELIGHT. You did, too! I was sound asleep, and you said, "Delight! the telephone!" I heard you distinctly.

PHILIP. You must have been dreaming.

DELIGHT. Why didn't you go to school today?

PHILIP. I'm so far ahead, I thought I'd give the rest a chance to catch up.

DELIGHT. Goodness, you're lazy! How do you ever expect to be a portrait painter if you don't work at it? Look at the years I worked to become an actress. I never missed a day of dramatic school.

PHILIP. Oh, you've had a hard life, you have. The whole family puts its shoulder to your wheel! You don't call acting working, do you?

DELIGHT. It's a life work. I know I've still got a lot to learn, but so have you. Not that you seem to care.

PHILIP. What's the rush?

DELIGHT. What time is it?

PHILIP. It's after eleven.

DELIGHT. *(Rises, crosses* C.*)* I have someone coming in. I would like to have the house look well.

PHILIP. Who is coming?

DELIGHT. *(Crosses below sofa—sits chair below sofa)* No one you know. Sydney Armstead.

PHILIP. Does Maisie know him?

DELIGHT. No, he isn't anybody important.

PHILIP. I thought Maisie had asked you not to go out with people she doesn't know.

DELIGHT. I am not going out. He's coming in. Maisie has no objection to my having a young man in for a moment.

PHILIP. Not if she picks him.

DELIGHT. Maisie is always saying that I must have some recreation.

PHILIP. What is he? An acrobat?

READY DOOR BELL.

DELIGHT. My mother understands me. That is

more than you do. Life is never easy for an artist, even at home.

PHILIP. I'll say it isn't.

DELIGHT. *(Rises, crosses* D.R.*)* Oh, Phil, look at your things!

PHILIP. What about 'em?

DELIGHT. You are not going to leave them like that?

PHILIP. I am not leaving them. I'm working.

DELIGHT. You don't intend to sit there and work, while Sydney is here!

PHILIP. That's all right. You won't bother me. *(He goes back to his drawing.)*

DELIGHT. Oh, Philip! *(She starts to pick up drawing papers, etc.)* You are just like father.

PHILIP. How do you know? You don't remember him.

DELIGHT. I have often heard Maisie say so, and I don't think she meant it pleasantly.

PHILIP. Say. Leave those alone. They are just the way I want them.

DELIGHT. I'll be disgraced before Sydney. What kind of house will he think I live in? *(The door bell rings. She starts off right.)* There he is! Be nice to him. *(Exits.)*

PHILIP. You can depend on me, Pola Negri—I'll take him out to lunch. *(*ELLEN *crosses to door, opens it to admit* STEPHEN.*)*

ELLEN. Good morning, Mr. Applegate.

STEPHEN. Good morning, Ellen!

(Enter STEPHEN APPLEGATE, MAISIE'S *lawyer. He is a tall, middle-aged man, with a kind, shy manner. He has a mop of hair, and a shaggy moustache streaked with grey. He is not a romantic figure, perhaps, but he has his dreams, and somehow one senses this, and respects him for*

them. Just now, he carries a copy of "Women's Wear" and a "N. Y. World.")

PHILIP. Oh, hello, Stephen, I thought you were Delight's new sheik.

STEPHEN. *(L.C.)* No, no, I'm not. Where is your mother?

PHILIP. Why, she isn't here. We are not expecting her for lunch.

STEPHEN. They said at the shop, she had left for the day. Something important has come up. I suppose I ought to talk to her—but I have so much business waiting for me at my own office.

PHILIP. Can I do anything?

STEPHEN. *(Crosses to sofa, holding out "Women's Wear")* No. Er—do you know if she has seen this or not?

PHILIP. *(Laughing)* What would your clients think if they knew?

STEPHEN. *(Irritably)* Knew what?

PHILIP. Suppose you were run over. "Women's Wear" on body of slain lawyer!

STEPHEN. *(Crosses* L.C.*)* Well, if I'm to be Maisie's lawyer, I've got to know what's going on in the dressmaking business. *(Pause. Steps* L. *Crosses through arch.)* I'll go back to my office, so have her call me if she should come in.

PHILIP. Yes, I will.

STEPHEN. Thanks. *(He exits, pause—and* DELIGHT *peers cautiously in, with hair brush in hand.)*

DELIGHT. *(Crosses to sofa)* Philip, was that Sydney? Did you let him get away?

PHILIP. That was Stephen Applegate about some mix-up at the shop.

DELIGHT. *(Crosses* D.R., *brushing hair)* That old stodge. He has his own business, why does he poke into Maisie's affairs?

PHILIP. Don't be disrespectful. You may live to regret it. *READY PHONE.*

DELIGHT. *(Crosses to window)* What are you talking about?

PHILIP. Well, don't you think Maisie is keen about him? He is certainly gone on her.

DELIGHT. You are a fool!

PHILIP. Maybe, but she is.

DELIGHT. *(Throws window open—kneeling on window seat)* There he is standing on the corner, the idiot. Maisie is not like that.

PHILIP. What do you mean, "like that?"

DELIGHT. That sort. To fall in love! No decent woman falls in love after she is thirty-seven.

PHILIP. You are dead wrong, Delight. It is forty years and over that appreciates the subtleties of emotional excitement.

DELIGHT. How disgusting. You talk like a suppressed book.

PHILIP. You wait. Applegate will be your papa yet.

DELIGHT. *(Crosses back to him)* You ought to be ashamed of yourself. How dare you suggest—such a thing! *(Ruffling his hair with brush.)* Maisie thinks marriage is childish.

PHILIP. Because she was married at seventeen. She'll get over that. *(The telephone rings.* DELIGHT *answers.)*

DELIGHT. Hello. Oh, hello, Maisie. Stephen was here looking for you. He just left. I don't think I could. Wait a minute. *(To* PHILIP*)* She wants him. Call him. Hurry, he'll catch a bus or something. *(*PHILIP *flies to the window. Leans out. Sees* STEPHEN.*)*

PHILIP. Stephen! Stephen! The telephone. *(To* DELIGHT*)* He's coming. *(Crosses back to his chair.)*

DELIGHT. *(Into telephone)* Hello, Maisie, I got

him. Oh, yes, I'll tell him. *(She hangs up.* PHILIP *sits, armchair* R. *Crosses* D.R.C.*)* You can tell him she's around the Brevoort and will be right in. Say for him to wait. I don't want to see him. *(She exits—opens door and goes towards her room. Off stage)* Oh, Ellen, bring me some coffee.

ELLEN. *(Off* L.*)* Yes, Miss, I will. (STEPHEN *enters—crosses to phone.)*

PHILIP. It was Maisie— She hung up— She'll be here in a minute. (STEPHEN *unfolds paper, sits down* U.L.C.*)* Want a magazine?

STEPHEN. Thanks, no.

PHILIP. Do you mind if I go on with this? *(He looks up from drawing board.)*

STEPHEN. No, go right ahead. *(He reads in silence a minute.)*

PHILIP. As long as you are not doing anything, would you mind holding out your arm?

STEPHEN. What for?

PHILIP. I'm doing arms today. (STEPHEN *raises right arm.)* You wouldn't roll up that sleeve?

STEPHEN. *(Who has put his arm up awkwardly)* I don't think so.

PHILIP. I didn't think so, either. A little more grace is all I ask. Hope I don't tire you.

STEPHEN. Hope not. *(A few moments elapse.* PHILIP *works.* STEPHEN *reads with one arm up.* MAISIE *enters.* MAISIE *is pretty, gay and successful.)*

MAISIE. *(*D.L.C.*)* Oh, my God, Stephen, you are not on the subway!

STEPHEN. *(Starting up)* Hello, Maisie.

MAISIE. Oh, Stephen, I'm so glad they got you.

STEPHEN. Did you see "Women's Wear"?

MAISIE. No, are we being sued? Don't look so glum— I'm awfully glad I got you. *(She crosses to hall—leaves coat and hat. To* DELIGHT, *offstage)*

MRS. PARTRIDGE PRESENTS

See Page 13

Hello, darling. Just wanted you to know that I am home. *(To* STEPHEN) Did you see Vanity Fair? It has my picture in it.

STEPHEN. Wait until you see this paper.

MAISIE. Do let me get off my things. Give me a light. (STEPHEN *gives her one. She crosses to sofa.)* Didn't you feel like going to class today, or what happened?

PHILIP. I don't know, I just wanted to work at home a little.

STEPHEN. Now, Maisie——

MAISIE. *(To* PHILIP*)* Now, let me see what you have been doing.

PHILIP. Oh, Maisie, they're terrible.

MAISIE. Never mind. Let's have a look. (PHILIP *rises and crosses to* R. *sofa.)*

STEPHEN. Maisie, I wish you'd glance at this first.

MAISIE. Of course I won't. How can you expect me to talk business before this embryo Whistler?

STEPHEN. Oh, is he studying music now?

MAISIE. *(Sits sofa)* Whistler, the painter—idiot! (STEPHEN *sits armchair* U.L.C. *She holds out her hand to* PHILIP. *Reluctantly he gives her his drawing board.* MAISIE *grunts appreciatively. She examines it through half-shut eyes. Holds it off.)* That one is very nice. You really caught a motion and suspended it there. Look, Stephen, don't you think that is a beautiful arm?

STEPHEN. A poor thing, but mine own.

PHILIP. Oh, no, that's Ellen's. The other one—

MAISIE. Of course, couldn't you see that? They are both good. I think this—— Come here! You see, here? Now look—— *(She pulls her sleeve back. Flexes her wrist. She takes his hand so that he can feel the bone twisting.)* Feel that? Feel the bone? Now you have no feeling of a bone there—

Don't you think you ought to go up to class now? I hate for you to stay home so much.

PHILIP. Maisie, I've worked as hard here as I would there—harder. Honest. Besides, I've got to go somewhere this afternoon.

MAISIE. Oh, well, it is your career, old dear. Where are you going?

PHILIP. Nowhere much. *(*MAISIE *waits expectantly.)* Just to the shipyards.

MAISIE. The what? What for? I never saw such a child, Stephen. He is always hanging around somewhere, waiting for something to fall on him. What put this in your head?

PHILIP. I met a man on the subway that works in the Navy Yards, and he says if I came over to Brooklyn, he'd take me over a destroyer that is laid up there.

MAISIE. Oh, Philip. I really would rather you wouldn't. I have a horror of things like that.

PHILIP. Like what?

MAISIE. Well, you'll laugh, but I am so afraid you'll fall off something. I always get dizzy when I am up high.

PHILIP. But I don't.

MAISIE. Well, you might, and you're so careless. Besides, you shouldn't go around picking up acquaintances like that.

PHILIP. Maisie, you do. You always talk to everybody.

MAISIE. Well, that's different. I am a woman. Besides, I don't make dates with them. I don't want to seem mean, darling, but I can't let you go into the shipyards alone.

PHILIP. I never heard anything so silly, Maisie. I'm no baby. I leave it to Stephen. *(*STEPHEN *looks up from his paper.)*

STEPHEN. No, you don't.

MAISIE. I would rather you didn't go, please.

To please me? You are perfectly free, but I'd rather you wouldn't.

PHILIP. *(Sulkily)* All right.

MAISIE. Will you tell Ellen that I'll want some lunch? Will you stay, Stephen? *(*PHILIP *crosses* D.L.C. *and turns)*

STEPHEN. *(Shortly)* No, no, I can't. *(*PHILIP *crosses to arch)*

MAISIE. *(To* PHILIP*)* And Mr. Applegate regrets exceedingly that he can't be with us.

STEPHEN. I apologize, Maisie, but really I'm worried about this. *(Exit* PHILIP.*)*

MAISIE. *(She holds out her hand for the paper, but when she gets it she doesn't look at it)* Doesn't it seem too good to be true?

STEPHEN. Why, what?

MAISIE. Everything. My children, I suppose I meant. They let me live my life over again, only now I can do all the things I ever wanted to do. They are correcting all my mistakes. Do you suppose all children turn out so perfectly?

STEPHEN. No, I should think not. Please look at that article. *(Now* MAISIE *knows perfectly well what is in the article. She has been wondering for days how to tell* STEPHEN, *and she is still wondering.)*

MAISIE. Give me a minute to draw breath. Business is always there. I come home to remember that my life is really well-ordered and calm, and lovely. Although for a person who should have been an actress, or an artist of some sort, my business turned out very well, don't you think?

STEPHEN. I did think so until I read that paper.

MAISIE. Now, don't keep trying to upset me. You know I am not complacent often. You ought to be glad.

STEPHEN. I think you are the most romantic person I ever saw.

MAISIE. In what way?

STEPHEN. About everything. About your children.

MAISIE. *(Coldly)* My children! Explain.

STEPHEN. I am not criticising you, I think it is charming.

MAISIE. What's charming?

STEPHEN. I only wondered— You sacrifice so much for them, how can you be so sure that they really want to be these things?— And as much as you did, when you were younger.

MAISIE. Of course they do. I'm only helping them to get what they want. I shall never interfere with my children's lives.

STEPHEN. I have often wondered if Delight really wanted to be an actress, as much as you think she does.

MAISIE. Why, of course she does.

STEPHEN. How do you know?

MAISIE. I know because I wanted to be one myself. Hasn't the child worked all of her life for it? I never saw such courage, and determination. And as for Philip—when he was a little boy of three, somebody gave him a box of cheap crayons. He colored every picture he could lay his hands on.

STEPHEN. So did I. I don't want to argue with you, but Philip has never seemed to me quite the type for an artist.

MAISIE. Good Lord! Is Art something you wear in the tie, Stephen? Do you know that when Philip was six years old—I didn't know anything about it, until long afterwards—he drew a picture of some fish, and he went to every store in the neighborhood trying to sell it. Doesn't that prove anything?

STEPHEN. It does, if he sold it.

MAISIE. You think that's funny. Well, I don't. Where is that paper? Oh, yes! *(She reads)* Um

—front page. Good for business. La Fleur here by Easter. Maisie Partridge——

STEPHEN. How can they use your name as bringing over that French milliner, and we not know a word about it?

MAISIE. That is queer.

STEPHEN. *(Takes cablegram from pocket)* And I just got a cable from the Paris office. Read it. *(Holds it out to her.)*

MAISIE. Has it been punctuated?

STEPHEN. No.

MAISIE. Then read it to me. So stupid not to punctuate. She sent me a cable once—how to make a coat. I wish you could have seen the coat. We had to cable back for punctuations. What does it say?

STEPHEN. It says—that Marie La Fleur, milliner, is opening in your building, next your shop, in the spring.

MAISIE. Well, if there is one thing New York needs it is hats. Stephen, I wish you had seen the terrible hats I saw on the Avenue coming down. There should be a law about it. A good hat is just as important to the morals of the country as a clean book.

STEPHEN. Maisie! These things both say that Marie La Fleur is opening——

MAAISIE. Well, you know Marie La Fleur is the best milliner in Paris; with the impossible exception of Reboux, Maria Guy, or Rose Descat—and I couldn't get them.

STEPHEN. You couldn't get them? What on earth have you done, Maisie?

MAISIE. When I couldn't get them, I got La Fleur, which perhaps after all is better, because she doesn't sell to the trade.

STEPHEN. Let me get this straight.

MAISIE. *(Rises, crosses to bench and sits)* It is

very simple. I am explaining it to you. When I leased that building next door to the shop to keep out competition, we didn't expect it to remain idle for six months. When I wanted to use it for workrooms, you said, you remember, Stephen?—that the business didn't warrant additional workrooms. You reminded me that I am a conservative dressmaking firm, that doesn't go in for splurging. I agreed with you. You remember, Stephen?

STEPHEN. I remember—but what——

MAISIE. Let me finish. Of course, I always take your advice, and if you thought that the business did not warrant extra workrooms, you must be right. So all I could see to do, was to put in hats, and increase the business.

STEPHEN. And the expenses.

MAISIE. For a little while perhaps. That's why I didn't talk it over with you at the beginning. You see, I always planned that when I put in hats, it would be an event——

STEPHEN. But you didn't have to import a whole establishment.

MAISIE. Stupid! That is just the charm of the whole idea. Paris! Stephen. On Fifty-fifth street! After all, every dressmaker in New York has a few stray French hats standing about waiting to be reduced, but nobody has a real live French milliner running her own little shop, here, and in Paris at the same time! Arriving every fall and spring; bringing her own girls; making her own hats on the customers' heads; with appointments and fittings and French conversation, just the way they do it in Paris —and twice as expensive!

READY DOOR BELL.

STEPHEN. But costing you five times as much.

MAISIE. Stephen, you old bat. Don't you see she will be a sensation? And every single customer that wants a La Fleur hat will have to pass through Mai-

sie Partridge's showroom to get it! *(Rises, crosses to table and leaves cigarette.)*

STEPHEN. But I've just rented that self-same building to Toddhunter. Here's the lease.

MAISIE. You haven't. I can't let him have it now.

STEPHEN. Well, why did you tell him he could?

MAISIE. I didn't.

STEPHEN. He understood you to say so.

MAISIE. All I said was I would do all in my power to persuade you to rent it to him.

STEPHEN. Oh, I see—that makes it just dandy.

MAISIE. I had to be pleasant to him, Stephen. His funny old wife and daughters buy all their clothes from me, and he has six daughters. I know we can fix it. *(Sits bench. Doorbell.)* I haven't signed anything.

STEPHEN. No, but he has. Here's the lease with his signature. What are you going to do about it? *(*MAISIE *takes them, tears them across.* STEPHEN *rises.)*

MAISIE. That's over. Tell him I've changed my mind. *(Enter* ELLEN, *crosses to door, admits* KATY *and exit.)*

STEPHEN. You've made an awful fool out of me.

MAISIE. Don't be silly, I'll speak to Toddhunter myself. *(*KATHERINE EVERETT *enters.)* Well, Katherine, how are you? *(Drop* D.C. STEPHEN *drops* D.C.*)*

KATHERINE. *(Crosses* C. *to* MAISIE*)* Well, I feel pretty well, thank you. Oh, Mr. Applegate, what a pretty tie! *(*STEPHEN *mutters something, and tries to see what tie he has on.)* I saw you at Carnegie Hall the other night, but I couldn't catch your eye. *(Turns to* MAISIE.*)* He looked breathlessly highbrow.

STEPHEN. Must have been the ventilation. *(To* MAISIE*)* I'd better see Toddhunter myself. *(*STEPHEN *exits to hall.)*

MAISIE. *(Following him)* Now don't be silly—Stephen. *(*DELIGHT *rushes in from her room.)*

DELIGHT. *(*D.L.*)* Was it someone for me? Oh, hello, Katy, was it you at the door?

KATHERINE. Hello, Delight. What a cute dress.

DELIGHT. *(Turning to* MAISIE*)* Do you like it? Thanks. Maisie, darling, what are you doing home so early?

MAISIE. *(*U. *in arch—Absently—Reflectively)* I know. I'll write a letter. *(She exits.)*

KATHERINE. *(Crosses to below sofa and sits in chair)* I can only stay a minute. I promised mother faithfully to be home by 12:30.

DELIGHT. *(Crosses* D.R.*)* I'd ask you stay for lunch, only Maisie is home, and to tell you the truth I am expecting Sydney Armstead.

KATHERINE. Not really! Is *he* your new flirt? I must know all.

DELIGHT. *(Turns back)* There isn't anything to tell. This will be the first time he has ever come to see me.

KATHERINE. Oh, dear, and I have to go. You know how mother is. Is he very attractive?

DELIGHT. *(Moves chair* D.R. *near* KATHERINE *and sits)* Yes, he is, as a matter of fact. He has a sort of scientific farm in Westchester.

KATHERINE. Well, isn't that fascinating! Where did you meet him?

DELIGHT. On Long Island. At the Tracys' dance week before last. He's a cousin of theirs.

KATHERINE. I know he is. I knew I should have gone to that dance, but a distant aunt of mother's died, and left me five hundred dollars, and mother didn't think I ought to go.

DELIGHT. You told me. He brought me home. He has a marvelous car. An enormous one, my dear.

KATHERINE. Well, isn't that fascinating! How many times have you seen him since?

DELIGHT. Once from the top of the bus. He saw me, too. We just stared at each other until we got near enough to wave. I didn't see him again until yesterday. I was passing the Plaza on my way from rehearsal, and whom should I see, going in the door! So—I went in to buy a magazine.

KATHERINE. Did you run into him?

DELIGHT. Well, wait a minute. I walked down to the grill, and there he was, sitting in the corner, with that awful red-haired girl, who is visiting Eloise. You know—the one that's so brazen——

KATHERINE. Oh, I think she's attractive! *(*DELIGHT *silences her with a look and continues.)*

DELIGHT. I pretended to be looking for somebody. He saw me finally, and came right over to speak to me. I said I'd promised to meet you—— (I hope you don't mind?) He said he was going to be passing today, and could he come in for a minute.

KATHERINE. It sounds serious to me. What about your career? You've always said you'd never marry.

DELIGHT. Of course, I can never be *too* serious. Besides, I couldn't disappoint Maisie. But Katy—he is so sweet!

KATHERINE. Do you think he'll ask you to marry him?

DELIGHT. Well, I don't know. He kissed me.

KATHERINE. Delight!

DELIGHT. It was at the dance. We sat on those steps near the water—and there was a moon. We neither of us could think of anything to say, but finally he asked me if I knew anything about farming.

KATHERINE. Really?

DELIGHT. He is awfully intelligent.

KATHERINE. Oh, it's the most romantic thing I ever heard.

DELIGHT. Well, he has a farm. I told you, of course. Well, we were looking at each other, and suddenly he kissed me.

KATHERINE. Oh, how beautiful.

DELIGHT. He just sort of grabbed me, and said, "Darling," and kissed me.

KATHERINE. Delight, I am so thrilled. Did you mind?

DELIGHT. I adored it.

KATHERINE. Well, I am dying to meet him.

DELIGHT. *(Rises. Crosses to window)* Wouldn't you think he'd call me up the next day? Katy, it haunts me day and night, for fear he has forgotten it.

KATHERINE. Oh, don't be silly, Delight. You are not the kind of a girl that men take lightly. Imagine you in love!

DELIGHT. *(Crosses to her)* I'm not! Do you think I am? *(Sits chair* D.R.*)*

KATHERINE. Wasn't he surprised when you told him you were an actress?

DELIGHT. Well, you see, I didn't tell him. He was born in Boston.

KATHERINE. Maisie will never let you marry him.

DELIGHT. I know it. I made my choice long ago, Katy. Practically before I was born.

KATHERINE. Oh, Delight, you are wonderful. I wish I were strong-minded. But my mother is not like Maisie. My mother would jump at marrying me to a rich relation of the Tracys'. My mother has my life mapped out. I haven't a chance.

DELIGHT. Maisie has always let me decide everything for myself, and she has worked as hard over my career as over her own.

KATHERINE. What a funny thing to say. I would never think of designing dresses as a career.

DELIGHT. Katherine Everett! My mother is the

smartest dressmaker in New York and one of the best-known in the world.

KATHERINE. I know that. I'm just living for the day when I'll get a husband rich enough to buy all my clothes at her shop. But I think of a career as writing books, or going on the stage.

DELIGHT. Well, if it comes to that, her costumes were the success of Cary Adams' play last year. You know, the one at the Greenwich Village Theatre. How do you suppose I got in vaudeville? Cary Adams got me the job, because he thinks Maisie is such a wonderful designer. Maisie goes before me every step of the way. I couldn't help being a great actress with Maisie behind me.

KATHERINE. Wouldn't it be marvelous if Cary Adams would fall in love with you, and make you a star? Then you wouldn't feel so bad because Maisie won't let you marry Sydney.

DELIGHT. *(Disgusted)* Oh, Katy, you're so romantic! *(She sighs.)* Oh, Katy. I dread to think of what I'll have to say to him, if he ever remembers that he kissed me. (MAISIE *enters, sealing an envelope—crosses to desk.)*

MAISIE. I can never find a stamp in this house. (KATHERINE *rises.* MAISIE *calls)* Philip, Philip, find me a stamp, will you? *(Crosses* D.C.*)* What are you two infants looking so solemn about?

KATHERINE. I wish my father could hear you call me solemn! He says if they took the top off my head feathers would blow out. *(She giggles.* PHILIP *enters.)*

PHILIP. *(Crosses to* MAISIE) Where is your letter? Give it to me. *(Takes it.)* I'll attend to it. (DELIGHT *rises, sets back chair, crosses to window* U.R. *He puts letter in his pocket.)*

MAISIE. Thank you, Philip darling. Give me a cigarette. Oh, "Third Base," those nasty things. They're the only kind that ever made me sick. Give

me a light. Here's one of my own. *(With a lazy gesture towards* PHILIP, *sitting stool* D.C.*)* Look at my son, Katherine. I sent him to Provincetown for the summer to steep his soul in Art, and all he brought back was a taste for cheap tobacco. *(He gives her light.)*

PHILIP. *(*KATHERINE *sits in chair below sofa)* And seven Portugese words, Maisie. And I learned to sail a boat.

KATHERINE. He must have become a misogamist there. He never looks at me any more.

PHILIP. *(Cross to sofa)* I tell you what I'll do. If you'll buy the seats, I'll take you to the game tomorrow and teach you to pronounce that word. *(Sit sofa.* DELIGHT *has been looking nervously at her watch. Cross* U.R.*)*

MAISIE. Delight, dear, you seem restless.

DELIGHT. *(A step in—*D.R.*)* I had an awfully good sleep, really.

MAISIE. But you rehearsed until very late last night.

DELIGHT. I was gone a long time, but I really only *acted* ten minutes the first hour, and ten minutes the last.

PHILIP. While I was below in the bar looking at the paintings.

KATHERINE. A bar room! How exciting! Does Delight rehearse in a bar room?

PHILIP. Sure, we want to give her a stylish start.

DELIGHT. *(Crosses to window)* We have to go wherever they can find a hall. I know a bar room on Ninth Avenue sounds frightful, but it is a stepping stone to greater things.

PHILIP. Yeah. You may grow to be a bootlegger. *(Gets magazine "Asia" by him on sofa.)*

DELIGHT. Oh, dear, it's too late now! *(Crosses* U., *to bookcase.)*

MAISIE. *(Who has been watching her)* You are

very nervous, dear. Why do you keep wandering around the room? Is anything wrong?

PHILIP. She's got a Valentino coming.

DELIGHT. *(A step to sofa)* Be quiet. He is not. He is only a very ordinary young man, who is dropping in to—to borrow a book.

PHILIP. Delight, you never told me he was ordinary!

MAISIE. *(Suddenly the watchful mother)* Some one coming in, dear? Who is it?

DELIGHT. *(Crosses to window)* It's only Sydney Armstead. *READY PHONE.*

MAISIE. I can't quite place him. Is that the nice boy with the Impressionistic paintings?

DELIGHT. *(Vaguely)* Oh, no, Sydney is nothing like that.

KATHERINE. He has a farm in Westchester.

MAISIE. Oh, do you know him, Katherine?

KATHERINE. Not yet.

MAISIE. A—farm?

DELIGHT. *(Cross* D.R.*)* Yes, he's a scientific farmer.

MAISIE. Where did you meet him, dear?

DELIGHT. At the Tracys' dance. He brought me home in his car.

MAISIE. Why, I thought you came home with the Everetts.

KATHERINE. Well, at the last minute I couldn't go. You see, mother's Aunt Mary died, and left me five hundred dollars, and mother didn't think I ought to go.

MAISIE. But if you had just met him, dear?

KATHERINE. He's a relation of the Tracys'.

DELIGHT. You are all making an awful fuss over Sydney. He probably isn't coming anyway. It's too late now. It's five minutes after twelve. *(Crosses to window.)*

KATHERINE. *(Rise)* Oh, is it? I had no idea.

Oh, I must go. *(Pauses. Turns to* MAISIE.*)* Well, good-bye, Delight. So nice to have seen you, Mrs. Partridge. *(Crosses to below armchair* R.*)*

PHILIP. Oh, Katy, must you go? *(Telephone rings.* KATHERINE *sits down again armchair* R. DELIGHT *rushes to answer; trying to hide her excitement.)* *READY DOOR BELL.*

DELIGHT. Hello—Hello, Sydney. What? Oh, yes, Mr. Applegate. She's here. It is for you, Maisie.

MAISIE. *(Answering—rises, crosses to phone—leaves cigarette on tray on bench—*DELIGHT *crosses* R., *and sits on window seat)* Hello, Stephen. Thank God you've settled Toddhunter. And I've written the most charming note to him. Philip has it in his pocket. Thank you for calling. *(She hangs up.)*

KATHERINE. Mrs. Partridge, my father says you are marvelous. He says you have the business brain of a man.

MAISIE. *(Recovers cigarette. Crosses—sits stool* D.L.C.*)* He flatters me.

KATHERINE. No, he meant it. He admires you tremendously. He says you can buy and sell any dressmaking business in town.

DELIGHT. I don't believe he is coming at all. *(*PHILIP *takes cigarette from case and lights it.)*

MAISIE. Who? Oh, your new young man. Probably not, dear. Nothing less than dinner makes any difference in the budget.

DELIGHT. *(Rises and crosses* D.R.*)* I won't see him now if he does come.

MAISIE. Quite right, dear.

PHILIP. Anybody want a cigarette?

KATHERINE. *(*PHILIP *rises—crosses to* KATHERINE*)* I'll have one with you. It doesn't make any difference now. I'll be slaughtered anyway. *(She is about to take a cigarette when— Doorbell—* DE-

LIGHT *rises and crosses* D.R.C. KATHERINE *rises—crosses to below sofa.)*

DELIGHT. Oh, dear, I guess that's Sydney. *(She looks around at the solid family circle that doesn't intend to move.)*

KATHERINE. *(Rises, crosses and sits chair below sofa.* DELIGHT *moves* U.C.*)* I do hope it is. I'm dying to see him. *DOOR BELL.*

MAISIE. Shall we all stand up? *(*ELLEN *passes through the hall to answer to door.)*

PHILIP. *(Sits chair* U. R.*)* Lochinvar from Westchester. Thank God I have no daughters.

SYDNEY. *(Off stage)* Is Miss Partridge in?

ELLEN. Yes, sir. Won't you come in? *(Takes his hat, places it on table in hall.* ELLEN *exits.* SYDNEY *enters, embarrased at finding a room full of people. Stops by arch.)*

DELIGHT. Hello, Sydney.

SYDNEY. Awfully sorry to be so late. I'm not going to stay, really.

DELIGHT. Well, stay long enough to meet my mother. Maisie, this is Mr. Armstead.

SYDNEY. *(Steps to her, holds out hand)* I'm delighted, Mrs. Partridge.

MAISIE. How do you do, Mr. Armitage? *(Shakes hands.)*

DELIGHT. Armstead, Maisie.

MAISIE. I am so sorry.

SYDNEY. Natural mistake. Please don't bother.

DELIGHT. Miss Everett, may I present——?

KATHERINE. How do you do, Mr. Armstead? We all thought you were lost.

SYDNEY. I'm sure that's very kind of you.

MAISIE. My son, perhaps you know? Back of "Asia" over there.

DELIGHT. *(Sits on sofa)* Oh, yes, my brother, Sydney. *(*SYDNEY *starts to move and speak, but* PHILIP *waves a bored acknowledgement with his*

hand and returns to his "Asia.") Do sit down a minute. *(Puts sofa below her.)*

SYDNEY. Well, well, if I'm not keeping anybody? *(Starts to sit beside her.)*

MAISIE. *(Indicates armchair* U.L.C.*)* Will you take that big chair there? *(*SYDNEY *sits armchair* U.L.C.*)* And won't you have a cigarette? On the table at your elbow. *(*SYDNEY *finds himself some distance from* DELIGHT.*)*

SYDNEY. *(Pauses, glances around circle)* Thanks. I just dropped in to say I'm late. On the way down from the country, just about Scarsdale, the fan belt broke. I had to walk to a garage, and then the man had to drive back in his flivver to White Plains to get one to fit my car. I tried to telephone.

MAISIE. *(Smiling as though she didn't believe him)* We have all been late at times, Mr. Armstrong.

DELIGHT. It's all right. Don't explain, Sydney.

MAISIE. *(Lightly)* The main thing is that you got here, isn't it?

DELIGHT. Oh, Sydney, will you stay to lunch?

SYDNEY. No, no, really. I couldn't dream of lunch.

MAISIE. Of course, you must stay. And you, too, Katherine.

KATHERINE. Well, really, I shouldn't——

MAISIE. Don't let me persuade you, then. I know your mother will be worried. I wish you could, but if you feel you must go——

PHILIP. Some other time, perhaps, Katy? *(*KATHERINE *gathers her wraps reluctantly about her.* SYDNEY *seizes the opportunity to speak to* DELIGHT, *but* KATHERINE *refuses to be left out.)*

SYDNEY. You see, the infernal engine began cutting up——

KATHERINE. *(Rises and crosses to bench, sits)* You are Clara—*(Surprised to find she has sat on a*

cigarette box, draws it from under her, laughing, and continues)—Tracy's cousin, aren't you?

MAISIE. *(Spoken with* KATHERINE'S *"cousin")* Are you the English family, Mr. Armitage?

SYDNEY. *(To* KATHERINE*)* Yes, in a way. *(To* MAISIE*)* I beg pardon, what was that?

MAISIE. I met such a charming girl crossing last year. The Honorable Cecil Armitage. Is she a relation of yours?

SYDNEY. No. You see, my name is Armstead.

DELIGHT. Were you far from a garage?

KATHERINE. *(Spoken over* DELIGHT'S *line)* Isn't she a lovely girl? I mean Clara?

SYDNEY. *(To* KATHERINE*)* Yes, she is—— *(To* DELIGHT*)* About a mile.

MAISIE. *(*SYDNEY *rises.* MAISIE *rises and crosses to table with cigarette and puts it out on tray)* You must forgive me. I am so stupid about names. But now that we have the Lucy Stone League—*(Turns to* SYDNEY*)*—a man's name doesn't matter so much, does it? Do sit down.

SYDNEY. Thank you. *(Sits.)*

KATHERINE. Oh, I nearly joined that, but father doesn't approve of it. *(To* SYDNEY*)* Clara—well—Clara's so popular. We all thought she'd be the first of the crowd to marry. So many suitors! Falling over themselves on the front steps! *(Slight pause.* SYDNEY *starts.)*

SYDNEY. Really?

MAISIE. Would you like to join, Mr. Armstrong?

SYDNEY. I beg your pardon.

DELIGHT. She means the Lucy Stone.

SYDNEY. Oh, no, thank you. I don't think I quite agree with them.

DELIGHT. Oh, don't you, Sydney?

MAISIE. Then you are just the man we are after. What do you know about it after all?

SYDNEY. Not much, but I do think they are wrong

about Coolidge. I think he has given the country a very good administration.

DELIGHT. Sydney. It's not political.

KATHERINE. It's to compel women to keep their own names, no matter who they marry, but father says——

MAISIE. Not *compel,* Katherine! Delight, get a —*(*DELIGHT *rises)*—leaflet from my desk, and give it to Mr. Armstrong. *(Sits lower end of sofa.* DELIGHT *crosses to desk* U. L., *gets leaflet from drawer.)*

SYDNEY. Armstead.

MAISIE. Of course! Delight is a very enthusiastic member. So lucky, this generation. I wish I'd had an organization back of my ideas, when I was young. *(*DELIGHT *crosses to* L. *of* SYDNEY *with leaflet.)*

KATHERINE. Do you know Ted Stanton?

DELIGHT. *(Hands him leaflet)* Yes, he does, what about him? *(Sits stool.)*

SYDNEY. *(Takes it)* Thanks. Knew him in college.

KATHERINE. Clara and Delight and I went to school together. Well, isn't that a coincidence? Oh, about Teddy, I always said it would be Teddy. I haven't any grounds for it——

SYDNEY. Oh, really, I don't think——

DELIGHT. *(Firmly)* Neither do I.

KATHERINE. Well, maybe not. Do you know Billy Treadwell?

SYDNEY. No, I——

KATHERINE. You know Billy Treadwell, don't you, Phil? I always said he was in love with Clara.

PHILIP. *(Who has been reading "Asia")* Don't know either of 'em.

KATHERINE. Yes, you do. You remember once in my house, when you played that waltz you made up. The one that sounds like, "Kiss Me Again"? Billy Treadwell was the one who said——

MRS. PARTRIDGE PRESENTS

See Page 31

PHILIP. *(Shortly)* I remember.

DELIGHT. *(To* SYDNEY*)* Is it very cold out?

SYDNEY. Medium. I like this kind of weather.

KATHERINE. Have you seen Clara lately?

SYDNEY. Not since her dance. *(His glance meets* DELIGHT'S. *They remember the dance.)*

MAISIE. I must thank you for bringing Delight home that night. I thought, of course, she'd come home with the Everetts.

KATHERINE. I hated to miss that dance! *(To* SYDNEY*)* You see, mother's Aunt Mary died, and left me five hundred dollars——

MAISIE. Oh, while I think of it, Katherine. Your mother told me that she would let me see that dinner gown she had made at Chanel's when she was in Paris last month.

KATHERINE. Oh, it is lovely, Mrs. Partridge. Black velvet. I can't describe it.

MAISIE. Suppose you get her on the telephone, and ask her if I can send for it in the morning?

KATHERINE. Could I telephone you when I get home, Mrs. Partridge?

MAISIE. Why, just get her on the wire. I'll speak to her.

KATHERINE. *(Rises)* She'll probably skin me alive. *(Goes to phone.)* Stuyvesant 5406.

PHILIP. *(Rises, crosses to table, leaves "Asia" beneath it, getting "American." To* SYDNEY*)* Seen the Follies?

SYDNEY. I beg your pardon?

PHILIP. Have you seen the Follies?

SYDNEY. No, I've missed them so far. *(*PHILIP *sits armchair* R. *and reads.)*

KATHERINE. So have I. Let's get up a party. *(Into telephone)* Hello, Mother dear. This is Katherine. Mrs. Partridge wants—— *(Pause.)* Yes, I was just on my way home, and I dropped in to see—— *(Pause.)* Mother, please don't scold me in

front of all these—— *(Pause.)* I am going out the door now— Hello! Hello . . . Oh, she's gone! *(Set down phone.)* They must have cut us off. Sorry to run away,—*(Drop* C.*)*—Mrs. Partridge, but mother is absolutely speechless. *(*SYDNEY *rises.)*

MAISIE. *(Rises)* I understand. Give your mother my love.

KATHERINE. She's simply breathing flames. Good-bye. *(Turns to* SYDNEY*)* Mr. Armstead. You fix the party with Philip, and I'll try and make it. *(Drops* L. *of* MAISIE.*)* I hope I get there before she dies of convulsions.

MAISIE. *(Crosses to* L., *taking* KATHERINE *with her)* Philip will get you a taxi. Philip!

KATHERINE. Would you?

PHILIP. *(Rises and crosses direct to arch)* But I won't explain to your mother. *(They exit* U.L. MAISIE *returns* L.C.*)*

SYDNEY. Will you have a cigarette, Mrs. Partridge?

MAISIE. I will! Thank you. *(*SYDNEY *crosses to her—offers case, she takes one.* SYDNEY *lights one for her.* MAISIE *suddenly takes it from her mouth and looks at it.)* What kind are these?

SYDNEY. Third Base. Don't you like them?

MAISIE. Oh, yes. Philip's favorite cigarette. There is no cigarette like them. Do excuse me, won't you? I must speak to Ellen. *(She exits, carrying it gingerly, obviously about to throw it away.* SYDNEY *turns to stand left of fireplace* U.L.C. *and leaves match.)*

DELIGHT. *(Rises, takes a step* L.*)* Don't you think my mother is wonderful?

SYDNEY. *(Drops* R. *of* DELIGHT*)* Yes, but do you know, I was awfully surprised.

DELIGHT. Surprised? What do you mean?

SYDNEY. She is not at all like your mother.

MRS. PARTRIDGE PRESENTS

See Page 32

DELIGHT. I don't think mothers are much like their daughters nowadays.

SYDNEY. She seems awfully young. I don't think she likes me.

DELIGHT. *(Alarmed)* What makes you think so?

SYDNEY. She made me feel kind of flat, about bringing you home from the dance.

DELIGHT. Don't worry about it. She was only surprised. You see, I forgot to mention it.

SYDNEY. You didn't forget you had gone, did you?

DELIGHT. Oh, Sydney, no! (MAISIE *enters.)*

MAISIE. *(Crosses to between them)* Heaven knows when lunch will be ready. I left Ellen muttering under the stove! It seems the gas isn't all that it should be. Sit down, won't you? (SYDNEY *sits sofa. Sinks comfortably into her chair* U.L.C.—*left arm about* DELIGHT, *who sits on* L. *arm of chair.)* Tell me, Mr. Armitage, do you like farming, or did you inherit it?

SYDNEY. Well, yes and no.

MAISIE. Indeed?

SYDNEY. You see, I bought the farm from my uncle, but he died before I paid for it.

DELIGHT. Sydney, didn't you pay his heirs?

SYDNEY. I was his heirs.

MAISIE. And now you have to live on it. Are you really a scientific farmer, or do you let nature take its course?

DELIGHT. I intended to tell you. I ran across a book on scientific farming in the Public Library.

MAISIE. What on earth were you doing there?

DELIGHT. Why, why—I—often go in for an hour.

MAISIE. I never know what Delight will do next. Such a carefree, irresponsible child. I confess, I envy her, when I see her in her little red suit, dancing along the avenue.

DELIGHT. Maisie! You'd think I was a monkey.

MAISIE. You are like an autumn leaf, my dear—blown by the wind—perhaps at last to come to rest beside some great boulder;—though I hope not!

SYDNEY. Still, the love of a good man——

MAISIE. Why can't we think of something amusing, until lunch is ready? *(She becomes delicately insulting.)* Delight, I'm sure he plays Parchesi!

DELIGHT. *(Rises)* Maisie!

SYDNEY. *(Rises, steps to her)* Say! Do you play Parchesi? I think it's great. I'll play with you.

MAISIE. Good! I wonder where the board is?—know where the dice are? *(Rises—she gets them. Crosses to desk, opens drawer, takes out dice box containing dice and crosses back to* DELIGHT.*)* Delight, find the Parchesi board.

DELIGHT. Maisie, I haven't seen it for years. I have forgotten how to play——

MAISIE. You keep score, dear. Go and find the Parchesi board. *(*DELIGHT *exits.)*

SYDNEY. Can't I do something?

MAISIE. Yes, clear that off and then pull up that stool. It's a wonderful idea of yours, Mr. Armitage. *(He clears cigarette box and ash tray from bench, setting them on table. He brings bench from before fire to* D.R. *of her—he sets stool* R. *of bench—she rattles the dice.)* How much shall we play for?

SYDNEY. *(Sits stool)* I'll shoot anything you say. You make it.

MAISIE. Well, we'll each put up a dollar and the one who is farthest ahead when lunch is served, gets them both. Deuces running wild. Oh, no, of course that isn't the game. *(*DELIGHT *enters—she blows the dust from the board absently.)* Find it, dear? Splendid! *(Takes board, opening it on bench.)*

DELIGHT. Here it is. I think you are both crazy. *(Sits* L. *arm of chair.* SYDNEY *takes box, turning out counters on board.)*

SYDNEY. What color do you want, yellow or green?

MAISIE. Green is smarter this fall. *(She finds the directions, scans them hastily.)* The Royal Game of India, Parchesi. *(Gives box to* DELIGHT.*)* You go first. *(*SYDNEY *throws. He has completely succumbed to* MAISIE'S *charm.)*

SYDNEY. I'm awfully glad you were here today. Five and four. It's your turn.

MAISIE. *(Takes dice)* Yes, I sometimes come home—*(She throws the dice.)* Five and six *(Moves her men)*—for lunch. I see very little of my children, but they seem to like me. You have probably seen more of Delight—*(*SYDNEY *takes dice)* —than I have in the last week or two.

SYDNEY. I guess that's right. *(Throws dice.)*

DELIGHT. Oh, Sydney, only by accident.

MAISIE. True, Delight doesn't manage much time for playing. *(*SYDNEY *moves man.)* Isn't it strange, nowadays, girls either play all the time, like Katherine Everett, or work all the time, like Delight.

DELIGHT. It's your turn, Maisie!

SYDNEY. What do you ever work at, Delight?

MAISIE. *(Throws the dice)* Why, surely you know? She's rehearsing. *(Moves man.)*

SYDNEY. *(Takes dice)* Oh, for the Junior League. *(He rattles dice gaily.)*

DELIGHT. Go on, throw, Sydney! *(He throws.)* Six! *(*SYDNEY *moves man.)*

MAISIE. Oh, mercy no. She's on the stage.

SYDNEY. *(Half rising)* An actress! On the stage! *(*MAISIE *takes dice.)*

DELIGHT. Maisie!

MAISIE. Yes, didn't she tell you?

SYDNEY. No, she didn't.

DELIGHT. Sydney, I had a good reason. I can't explain it to you now, but I had a good reason.

SYDNEY. *(To* MAISIE*)* Don't you mind?

MAISIE. Mind? Certainly not. We city folks don't mind a little thing like that.

SYDNEY. *(To* DELIGHT*)* But look here.

MAISIE. Delight has great talent. When she was a baby I made up my mind that, at any sacrifice, Delight should have a career. You can't imagine what an adorable baby she was. I wish you could have seen her. *(Throws.)*

DELIGHT. *(Furious)* Maisie! I'm glad he didn't. *(*MAISIE *makes a point in the game—moves man.)*

MAISIE. There. That man goes home. I take twenty. *(She starts to finger-walk.)*

SYDNEY. *(Miserably)* Do you mean a regular actress? *(Takes dice.)*

MAISIE. Indeed yes. She's opening Monday night. At least, we think so. It has been postponed three times. *(*SYDNEY *throws.)*

SYDNEY. Where?

DELIGHT. In Brooklyn. *(*SYDNEY *looks horrified.)*

MAISIE. *(Takes dice)* At one of the largest theatres. Moss's.

SYDNEY. I beg your pardon?

MAISIE. B. S. Moss. I adore the theatre. *(Throws.)*

SYDNEY. *(Very politely, to* DELIGHT*)* What is this thing you are acting in?

READY PHONE.

DELIGHT. A sketch.

MAISIE. A dramatic sketch. She has a very emotional part. *(*SYDNEY *takes dice.)* Delight is the young stenographer. She is the only woman in it.

SYDNEY. *(Throws)* How many men?

MAISIE. Let me see. They have changed it so many times. How many are there now, Delight?

DELIGHT. Three.

MAISIE. Yes, there are three men now.

SYDNEY. Have you been an actress long?

MAISIE. This is her first part. But she went to Dramatic School for two years and did very well. You'll pardon my speaking of it, Mr. Armstead, you're going backwards! *(*SYDNEY *starts to move man, backwards, and continues until——)*

SYDNEY. Oh, I'm all mixed up. *(*ELLEN *enters.)*

ELLEN. I beg pardon for being so late, but lunch is ready now.

MAISIE. *(All rise)* Thank you, Ellen. Come along, children. Wouldn't you like to wash your hands, Mr. Armstrong? Ellen will give you a clean towel—— *(*SYDNEY *crosses to arch and exits.)* Ellen, get Mr. Armstrong a clean towel.

DELIGHT. Maisie, how could you make such a fool of me in front of Sydney?

MAISIE. Oh, don't be so cross. *(*MAISIE *crosses to answer the telephone. Picks up phone.)* Yes? No, this is Mrs. Partridge. Who is this, please? *(Her voice awed and gracious)* How do you do? Just a moment. Delight, Delight, come quickly! *(*DELIGHT *crosses* U.C.*)* It's your manager.

DELIGHT. I suppose they have changed it again.

MAISIE. Oh, you don't?

DELIGHT. What?

MAISIE. Oh, you do?

DELIGHT. Oh, what?

MAISIE. No, I've never been there.

DELIGHT. Where?

MAISIE. Yes. Take the Forty-second Street crosstown car, and get on the ferry. Four cents, yes. Then take the car marked—— Yes, I understand, this is after you get off the ferry. Union Hill? I'd better write it down. *(To* DELIGHT*)* Get me a pencil. (DELIGHT *does so. Crosses to desk, gets pencil and pad and returns.)* How have you been? That's nice. Now, will you repeat it all? Yes, Forty-second Street, Red. Get on the ferry. The

car marked Union Hill. Go to the theater called—What was that? Is that what it's called? Yes, I have that now. About two o'clock. Oh, you do! Yes, she'll be there early. Good-bye. *(Hangs up, takes pad and pencil and writes.)*

DELIGHT. Maisie, what is it?

MAISIE. You are going to open! You are the first on the bill.

DELIGHT. When?

MAISIE. Right away, today!

DELIGHT. *(Sits chair* U.C.*)* Today! Where?

(SYDNEY *enters and stands by arch.)*

MAISIE. Weehawken. It's a terrible trip, but I'll go with you. You'll be all worn out before you get there. *(Crosses to arch.)* You must have some luncheon at once. Come, Mr. Armitage. *(Exit* MAISIE. *Off stage)* Ellen, get some lunch ready—

DELIGHT. *(Rises—crossing to sofa)* Sydney! Don't stand there staring at me. You'd think you never saw an actress before in all your life.

SYDNEY. *(Crossing* D.C.*)* Look here, Delight—why didn't you tell me?

DELIGHT. Please, I can't go into that now. I had an awfully good reason, Sydney. Won't you take my word for that?

SYDNEY. Well, if you promise never to do anything like this to me again.

DELIGHT. Of course I won't. And try not to despise me. Are you coming over to see it? *(A step to him.)*

SYDNEY. Do you want me to?

DELIGHT. I do, Sydney.

SYDNEY. Then I'll come. I'll take you over. *(He starts out.)* Explain to your mother where I've gone. *(Crosses into hall; gets hat.)*

DELIGHT. *(Crossing to arch)* But where are you going?

SYDNEY. *(At arch* U.L.*)* I'll tell you when I get back. *(He exits.)*

(As soon as he is gone, DELIGHT *begins to shudder, and makes futile nervous gestures. She takes a few steps forward, pulls herself together, strikes an attitude, and cries dramatically—)*

DELIGHT. *(Crossing* D.C.*)* Sir, I am only the stenographer in this place. *(She mutters in a deep voice)* And you are—? *(Droops her head and in her own voice)* Oh, I am Miss Smith. *(She suddenly looks vacant. She has forgotten her next line.)* Er—Miss Smith—Miss Smith, Miss Smith. Oh, Miss Smith! *(She sinks into a chair, muttering weakly)* I am Miss Smith, Miss Smith, Miss Smith—— Oh, yes! *(Deep voice)* So you are Miss Smith? *(She goes through her lines hurriedly, sotto voce. Nodding her head, making an occasional gesture, finally bursting out with)* God! What to me are your daughter's pearls? *(Crosses down* R.C. MAISIE *enters with hat on.)*

MAISIE. *(Crossing to her)* Darling! You must calm yourself. You'll make yourself ill.

DELIGHT. I'm sure I am going to forget.

MAISIE. Of course you won't, Baby. Come and lie down for a minute, just to please Maisie. *(She crosses to her—arm about her.)*

DELIGHT. *(Crossing to sofa)* No, no, no! Can't you see I am trying to get my part straight in my head? Maisie, will you hear my part?

(ELLEN *enters.)*

ELLEN. Mrs. Partridge, Ma'am, please will you

and the young man come to lunch or I'm not responsible.

(MAISIE *crosses into hall to get coat.)*

DELIGHT. He's gone. Ellen, go in my room, and look under my pillows, and bring me the little blue paper with the typewritten page between it. *(Exit* ELLEN.) "Alone till twelve last night——" *(Pause —whisper)* Maisie, I've lost my voice. I can't speak above a whisper.

(Enter ELLEN *with the part.* MAISIE *crosses to* DELIGHT.)

ELLEN. *(Giving part to* MAISIE) How would you like your eggs, scrambled or boiled? You don't have to speak. Just nod your head.

MAISIE. Get Miss Delight's things together to be ready to start. And Ellen, don't get excited.

DELIGHT. Be sure my make-up's in the bag.

ELLEN. Yes, ma'am. *(Exit.)*

DELIGHT. There's the audience. *(Bus. of raising curtain.)* Curtain! All right, Maisie.

MAISIE. An accomplice.

DELIGHT. Sir, I am only the stenographer in this place.

MAISIE. Are.

DELIGHT. I am Miss Smith.

MAISIE. Smith.

DELIGHT. Please let me pass.

MAISIE. Got you.

DELIGHT. Aha! But you may be mistaken.

MAISIE. In the summer.

DELIGHT. Eh?

MAISIE. Twelve last night.

READY DOOR BELL.

DELIGHT. God! What to me are your daughter's pearls?

MAISIE. Mr. Gordon.

DELIGHT. No.

MAISIE. Around here.

DELIGHT. No!

MAISIE. In Utica.

DELIGHT. Flesh and blood can stand no more. Have I the clothes to wear with pearls? Utica! Utica! Don't make me laugh. The gulf between Mr. Gordon's daughter and my pitiful ten dollars a week cannot be bridged over by a string of pearls. Get out of my way! Get out of my way! Get out of my way! *(She faints* D.R.C.*)*

MAISIE. *(Sits bench—*DELIGHT *sits upon the floor.)* That's very good, but I couldn't hear a word you said. Don't you think you ought to say it so the audience can understand it?

DELIGHT. I've got to say it fast. We are only allowed eleven minutes for the whole act.

MAISIE. Don't be nervous. You'll be all right when the audience is there. Now sit down, calm yourself, my dear. *(Looks at watch. Rises and crosses to arch—*DELIGHT *rises.)* Oh, my soul, we've got to hurry. Weehawken, boats. Now darling, you just rest yourself. I'll go and see if Ellen has your things ready——

DELIGHT. Be sure and pack an extra collar.

DOOR BELL RINGS.

MAISIE. *(Off stage)* See who's there——

DELIGHT. All right!

MAISIE. And oh!—call a cab!

DELIGHT. All right! *(*DELIGHT *rises and goes to door—*DELIGHT *admits* SYDNEY, *who carries a florist's box in one hand.)*

SYDNEY. *(Leaves hat in hall—gives box to her)* Here, good luck. Sort of tacky, bringing them myself, but I just thought of it.

DELIGHT. *(Opens it, and takes out roses—crosses above bench, lays box on it)* Oh, Sydney, is that where you went? How sweet of you. Sunset roses. How beautiful.

SYDNEY. *(Crosses to L. of her)* Oh, that's all right. Say, Delight—we're pretty good friends, aren't we?

DELIGHT. Of course.

SYDNEY. Are you very keen about this stage business?

DELIGHT. Yes.

SYDNEY. Well, what I meant was, do you really intend to go on with it? *(She starts to speak.)* Wait a minute! Would you consider ever giving it up? *(She starts to speak.)* Wait a second! I mean—do you imagine—you might get married?

DELIGHT. Eventually, perhaps. How can I say?

SYDNEY. Do you like me?

DELIGHT. Of course I do, Sydney—and the roses are lovely.

SYDNEY. 'S all right, Delight. I hate to see you throw yourself away on the stage. I mean, you are much too nice a girl. I wish I could tell you. I sound such an ass . . . Why don't you marry me?

DELIGHT. Oh, I wish you had asked me yesterday.

SYDNEY. I didn't think of it yesterday.

DELIGHT. Well, I can't. Oh, Sydney, I don't want to wreck your life. But I am committed. I have got to go on now. You don't know what my work means—I hardly know myself. I don't believe I could give it up for any man.

WARN CURTAIN.

SYDNEY. Delight, I'm—I love you. Do you? Don't you?

DELIGHT. I—yes, I do. Kind of— O, Sydney! *(He kisses her youthfully.)*

SYDNEY. Darling! *(Tries to think of something*

to say, fails and repeats) Darling! *(There is a little pause.)* Will you, Delight, give it up?

DELIGHT. Are you sure you love me? *(Kiss.)* Sydney; when did you know?

SYDNEY. When I kissed you that night at the party—I knew then. But I didn't realize it until I saw you yesterday—until after you'd gone in fact. You looked so—so—scared, somehow.

DELIGHT. Scared?

SYDNEY. Oh, you know—sort of young and pitiful. Oh, Delight, I could take care of you— I think —I can make you happy.

DELIGHT. *(In a low voice)* I am now, if you—if you really——

MAISIE. Ellen, keep something hot for Miss Delight. *(*MAISIE *enters. They draw apart, and* DELIGHT *repacks her flowers, tucking box under her arm.* MAISIE *is dressed for the street and carries* DELIGHT'S *bag in one hand and her hat and coat. Crosses* D.L.C.*—Sets down bag—*DELIGHT *drops* R. *of* MAISIE.*)* Delight, darling, we must hurry. I have your bag. Here's your hat. We must rush for the nearest taxi. *(Putting on* DELIGHT'S *hat.)* I couldn't find the extra collar, but you won't need it. We can't waste any more time. Kiss me. *(*DELIGHT *kisses her obediently.)* All your life I've waited for this day! *(She sweeps* DELIGHT *before her into the hall. Over her shoulders.)* Armstrong, take the bag! *(*SYDNEY *gives her a surprised glance. As* SYDNEY *grabs up the bag and coat and dashes after them)*

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

ACT II

SCENE: *The same as Act I*

TIME: *A few months later, on an afternoon in April.* DELIGHT *is discovered alone in the same room. She is sitting on the sofa with several books of verse. She is looking through one of these feverishly.*

DELIGHT. *(Seated on sofa—half aloud)*
"Why do you follow me?
Any moment I can be
Nothing but a laurel tree."
(She turns a page or two.)
"I am not willing you should go
Into the earth where Helen went"—
I should say not!
(She looks further.) Oh, dear! *(She looks up anxiously.* ELLEN *passes through hall to door, opens it and admits* KATHERINE.*)*

KATHERINE. Hello, Ellen, is Miss Partridge here?

ELLEN. Yes, Miss Everett, she's right in here.

KATHERINE. *(Comes through arch, crosses to* DELIGHT. ELLEN *crosses to desk, picks up two letters)* Hello, darling. I've got a message for you. *(She looks about carefully.)* What are you doing there?

DELIGHT. I'm looking for a quotation to put in a book. *(Exit* ELLEN.*)* What did Sydney say? *(Rises.)*

KATHERINE. Can you be at the Lafayette at 3:15?

DELIGHT. Was that all he said?

KATHERINE. He said it was safer than the Brevoort.

DELIGHT. I know. We nearly ran into Steve Applegate at the Brevoort on Thursday. Three fifteen. *(Sits sofa.)* Oh, dear, that's so long to wait! Oh, Katy! He's so sweet!

KATHERINE. *(Sits bench)* Oh, I think he's awfully attractive. Isn't it funny Maisie doesn't like him?

DELIGHT. Maisie would die if she knew I'd been seeing him. She's a perfect fury where he's concerned.

KATHERINE. Oh, my!

DELIGHT. You know she has scarcely mentioned him since the night of the vaudeville sketch.

KATHERINE. How funny! Why?

DELIGHT. The way he acted. I never told you. Katy, but I was fired from that sketch.

KATHERINE. Why, Delight! The idea!

DELIGHT. It doesn't matter now, but for a long time I couldn't talk about it. Then I got my job with the Repertory Theatre last winter and a girl told me that when Bernhardt came to America, someone threw an egg at her and that was a great comfort to me.

KATHERINE. You don't mean they actually——

DELIGHT. Yes, they did.— That's why Sydney doesn't like the stage. He can't bear to think that something like that might happen to me. *(Picks up book.)* Look!

KATHERINE. *(Takes book)* What's that?

DELIGHT. *(Hands it to her)* That's a present for Sydney.

KATHERINE. *(Taking it)* "Farm Problems of the Hour."

DELIGHT. I got it by accident. It's been out of print thirty years.

KATHERINE. Won't he be surprised? *(Gives book back.)*

DELIGHT. *(Takes book)* I want a quotation. Katy, what would you write in it?

KATHERINE. I don't know. Let me see—do you know that one about "Less than the dust——"?

DELIGHT. That's so old, Katy.

KATHERINE. It's old, but it's pretty.

DELIGHT. Here's one about a farmer pasted in the back.

KATHERINE. What's it say?

DELIGHT.

"She's false to you, good farmer,
She's climbing the bars on a ladder of stars,
And kissing a knight in armor."

KATHERINE. You better not put that in.

DELIGHT. Don't be a fool, I didn't intend to.

KATHERINE. I wish I could think of something by Kipling—he's so virile. (DELIGHT *continues her search.)* You know the one about "if you can"—something or other—and something—"you'll be a man, my son"?—or Service. Oh, do you know that one? I think it's the most beautiful poem ever written. *(Dreamily)* "I hailed me a woman from the streets, shameless, but oh so fair!——"

DELIGHT. What!

KATHERINE. Oh, of course you couldn't use it. But don't you think it's nice?

DELIGHT. Um-hum.

KATHERINE. I think everybody ought to take up poetry, don't you? Isn't there something you could use—if you change it around a little?

DELIGHT. *(Rises, crosses to desk with book)* No, never mind. I'll say "From Delight" and the date. *(Sits. She writes in the book.)*

KATHERINE. *(Rises, crosses and kneels in arm chair,* U.L.C.*)* Anyhow, I think Sydney will like

something of your own much better than a piece of poetry.

DELIGHT. There. *(Rises, crosses to her.)* How does it look?

KATHERINE. Fine!

DELIGHT. Notice a change in me, Katy?

KATHERINE. You look awfully dressed up.

DELIGHT. I mean in me.

KATHERINE. Oh, in you? Your eyes look bright.

DELIGHT. It's Sydney. He makes me see life and everything so clearly. When I am with him, I don't care anything about my career.

KATHERINE. That's just because you are so much in love with him.

DELIGHT. Katy, you are so understanding. You are the only comfort I have. It is sweet of you to take messages for me, and let Sydney call up your house so much.

KATHERINE. I've just loved doing it.

DELIGHT. Do you think it has been very wrong of me not to tell Maisie? Until Sydney came we were like sisters.

KATHERINE. How could you tell her? Hasn't she forbidden you to see him?

DELIGHT. Yes. That's what I mean. If Maisie weren't so busy getting ready for La Fleur's opening, she would have noticed. I couldn't have concealed it from her. Oh, Katy, you don't know what I've been through. *(Crosses to window, sits down right.)*

KATHERINE. I think you've behaved wonderfully. Delight, how could you go to the theatre and play night after night, in all the terrible weather we had last winter, knowing perfectly well that Sydney had no use for your art?

DELIGHT. He wouldn't even come to see me in it.

KATHERINE. I know he wouldn't. I tried to

make him go with me one matinee. He's so jealous of you, Delight. I think it's beautiful!

DELIGHT. You know he said he couldn't understand why I would go on week after week, just walking on, without much of anything to say.

KATHERINE. Why, when you said, "What an outrage!" I could hear you just as plain above everybody else. Wouldn't you love to get a marvelous part and make him proud of you?

DELIGHT. *(Solemnly)* Katy, can I trust you?

KATHERINE. *(In chair below sofa)* Why, Delight, of course.

DELIGHT. *(Rises, crosses to her)* Sydney and I have planned to elope.

KATHERINE. Oh, Delight! *(*PHILIP *comes in.)*

PHILIP. *(*L. *by arch)* Hello, Katy! *(*KATHERINE *rises.)*

DELIGHT. *(*PHILIP *crosses* D.R.*)* Philip, we were talking! *(Crosses* U.C.*)*

PHILIP. That's nothing new. *(*DELIGHT *sits sofa. Crosses* D.R. *and* U. *to window* R. *through speech, picks up tobacco pouch and fills pipe.)*

KATHERINE. *(Crosses* U.C.*)* Why, hello, Philip. Who was that awfully good-looking man you were with yesterday when you passed me? His face looked so familiar, I nearly bowed to him.

PHILIP. *(Drop* D.R.*)* Charlie Ludlow. Ever hear of him? He's a friend of Syd Armstead's.

KATHERINE. So that's Charlie Ludlow. I know all about his brother. He brought me home once in a taxi. He said his brother was a civil engineer, but there was nothing civil about him. *(She giggles.)* Well, I just must go. *(Sits bench.)* I've got to go all the way to Long Island before night, and you know how I am. Say, Phil, you wouldn't like to go with me to Clara Tracy's? She'd love to have you and I hate that trip alone.

PHILIP. Thank you, no. We have a feud on with

her family. Haven't we, Delight? *(Moves up to window.)*

DELIGHT. Sh-h!

KATHERINE. *(Rises, crosses* D.L.C.*)* Well, I've got to go. Oh, Delight, come outside. I want to ask you something.

DELIGHT. *(Rises—who has changed her mind about telling)* Not now. I'll tell you everything later. *(Crosses to her.)*

KATHERINE. Oh, all right. Before I go to Long Island, I'll see about that writing paper. *(*PHILIP *crosses to table* D.L.*)*

DELIGHT. The *what?*

KATHERINE. *(*PHILIP *crosses to table above sofa)* You know. You said you'd call for it. At three fifteen.

DELIGHT. Oh, that! Of course. Thank you, Katy. *(*PHILIP *above* L. *of sofa.)*

KATHERINE. *(Crosses back to* DELIGHT*)* Good-bye, darling. See you tomorrow—or will I see you tomorrow? *(*PHILIP *crosses to stand* L. *of fireplace.)*

DELIGHT. No, no. I'll talk to you later. Good-bye, dear. Katy, you won't tell?

KATHERINE. You can trust me. Good-bye, Phil. *(*KATHERINE *exits.* PHILIP *continues his search among the things on the stand.)*

PHILIP. *(*U.C. *Crosses to desk)* Say, did you see the matches?

DELIGHT. What matches? *(Crosses to sofa.)*

PHILIP. Any matches. *(By desk.)*

DELIGHT. *(Kneeling, puts books away under table above sofa)* Look in the kitchen.

PHILIP. I looked there first. *(Crosses to chair.)*

DELIGHT. Look in your pocket. *(*PHILIP *stops by desk, reaches in his pocket and finds matches, lights pipe. There is a pause.* DELIGHT *puts the*

books back, makes up her mind to talk to PHILIP.) Phil!

PHILIP. Yes?

DELIGHT. If I tell you something, you won't laugh at me?

PHILIP. How do I know? I suppose so.

DELIGHT. *(Rises and crosses to* PHILIP*)* Oh, Philip, I don't know what to do.

PHILIP. What's the matter?

DELIGHT. *(Sits chair* R. *of desk)* It's about the stage.

PHILIP. What's happened to it?

DELIGHT. Do you think I've got the temperament for an actress? Would you be very disappointed in me if I gave it up?

PHILIP. Well, if you felt that you couldn't do it—have you talked it over with Maisie?

DELIGHT. Phil, I didn't say I was going to! I only asked you what would you think if I should.

PHILIP. I don't get you.

DELIGHT. Well, do you think I'll ever make a success of acting? I mean a big success like Jane Cowl?

PHILIP. Who can tell? Miracles can happen.

DELIGHT. Then you think the thing for me to do is to get married and leave the stage?

PHILIP. Now, where did you get that idea?

DELIGHT. Philip,— *(Rises, steps to him)*—if I weren't your sister, would you be interested in me?

PHILIP. I'm not very interested in you as it is.

DELIGHT. What I mean is, if I should marry, do you think it will last?

PHILIP. What do you think I am—a fortune teller?

DELIGHT. He's so attractive—all the girls run after him.

PHILIP. Who?

DELIGHT. What if he should find someone he liked better?

PHILIP. What if who should?

DELIGHT. It's Sydney!

PHILIP. You mean to say that you are actually stuck on him? I know you've been seeing a lot of him.

DELIGHT. How did you know?

PHILIP. Charlie Ludlow let it slip. It's none of my business—I like Sydney all right—but you know what Maisie would say— I wouldn't make a fool of myself, if I were you.

DELIGHT. Be quiet! I'm not making a fool of myself. You're so unsympathetic! You *worm* my secrets out of me, and then make fun of me.

PHILIP. No one's making fun of you.

DELIGHT. *(Crosses to arch—turns)* You were, too. No one in this damn house understands me. I'll make my own decisions. I made them anyway. *(She exits and continues talking off stage. Before* PHILIP *has recovered from his astonishment,* MAISIE *enters from the street. She is excited and pleasantly distrait, crosses* L.C.*)*

MAISIE. *(Turns, sees* PHILIP*)* Hello! Hello, Philip. Bless your little heart. I didn't expect to find you home. Where's Delight?

PHILIP. *(Rises)* In her room. I'll get her. *(*PHILIP *starts toward the door.* MAISIE *scribbles.)*

MAISIE. *(Crosses* U.R.*)* Get Stephen on the phone for me, will you please?

PHILIP. *(Crosses to phone)* Sure. Bryant 603.

MAISIE. It is simply a divine day. There's May in the air. Everything smells of Spring.

PHILIP. It's muddy, isn't it?

MAISIE. I didn't notice. Ah, just go out and smell the spring to please me.

PHILIP. *(Into phone)* Mrs. Partridge to speak to Mr. Applegate. *(*R. *of table above sofa.* MAISIE

crosses to phone and takes it from PHILIP. PHILIP *crosses and sits at desk and writes.)*

MAISIE. Hello, Stephen. Please come down right away. I've just done something perfectly hideous— Yes, it's about money. I've just sent for Toddhunter to meet us here— I'm going to lease him that building on Fifty-fifth Street. I can't explain over the telephone . . . I'll expect you. *(Hangs up.)*

PHILIP. What building is that?

MAISIE. *(Drops* D.R.C.*)* The one next door the shop.

PHILIP. But I thought you were using it for hats.

MAISIE. *(Leaves scarf on sofa)* Philip, don't you bother about business; there's nothing in it. Always pretend that you don't know anything about it. *(Crosses around sofa to* L.C.*)* Philip, do something for me, will you? *(*PHILIP *rises, crosses to her.)* I have to see Delight now. Go out and take a walk—go to the pictures or something. What's worrying you? Something's on your mind.

PHILIP. *(*L.C.*)* It's nothing.

MAISIE. Don't be afraid to tell me about it.

PHILIP. I'm just all wrong.

MAISIE. Philip, darling! You are working too hard.

PHILIP. No, I'm not. I haven't worked——

MAISIE. Never mind. Go for a walk now and tonight we'll have a nice long talk. *(Puts him out of the room. Exit* PHILIP.*)* Delight! Oh, Delight! *(Crosses* C. DELIGHT *enters.)*

DELIGHT. *(Crosses to her)* Maisie! Why are you back so early? Has anything happened?

MAISIE. Yes. Something wonderful. If I told you that you could have whatever you wanted this very minute, what would you choose?

DELIGHT. Do you mean I can have it?

MAISIE. I do, I do!

DELIGHT. Will you let me see Sydney again?

MAISIE. *(Completely taken back)* Do you mean to say that that silly little Armitage boy is still on your mind?

DELIGHT. *(Sullen)* You asked me. You had no right to trick me!

MAISIE. My dear, I did not intend to trick you. I meant something you *really* want. *(Takes off hat, leaves it on sofa.)*

DELIGHT. Now that you have already heard it, I really would like to have you forgive Sydney.

MAISIE. *(Crosses* C.*)* Forgive him for the way he insulted you the night you opened in vaudeville? Don't be ridiculous. *(Sits chair* U.L.C.*)*

DELIGHT. He'd been drinking.

MAISIE. Of course he had. And you ask me to let you associate with a boy who—drinks?

DELIGHT. He doesn't. He has never been drunk before or since. You know perfectly well, he only got drunk because he saw my act.

MAISIE. Delight, be reasonable. What good can come of knowing a boy who has so little sense that he takes a girl to the theatre, gets rousing drunk, so that he has to be led home by the girl and her mother, because he can't drive his own car, and in his drunken stupor refuses to be put into a taxi?

DELIGHT. That's pretty unfair.

MAISIE. Delight, I will not talk about it. And you must put the whole unpleasant affair right out of your mind.

DELIGHT. If you would listen to me for three minutes——

MAISIE. It is no use. I do not like that Armitage boy, I don't trust him. I—I don't want to hear his name mentioned again.

DELIGHT. That's not his name anyway. It's——

MAISIE. I don't care what it is. I don't want to hear it. *(Rises.)* It is not fair of you to upset me

like this. You never behaved so about a boy before. I don't understand it. *(Crosses to window.)*

DELIGHT. Didn't you ever expect me to grow up?

MAISIE. I wish you would. Instead, you behave like a child of six. *(She relents.* DELIGHT *sits at desk.)* I don't want to be hard on you. Now, I have truly got a marvelous surprise for you.

DELIGHT. *(Sulkily)* What?

MAISIE. Guess.

DELIGHT. I can't.

MAISIE. Oh, Delight, you are exasperating! Delight, come here. *(*DELIGHT *rises and crosses to her.)* It's a part.

DELIGHT. Oh—oh, a part?

MAISIE. A real part. A charming ingenue in an adorable comedy.

DELIGHT. Who is it with?

MAISIE. Cary Adams.

DELIGHT. But, Maisie, I went in to see him last week, and he said he had nothing for me.

MAISIE. Nevertheless, he has a part for you, and you open in about a week—on Broadway! *(She beams upon* DELIGHT'S *horror-stricken face.)*

DELIGHT. *(Sits at arm chair* U.L.C.*)* Oh, Maisie. I couldn't do it. I haven't had enough experience.

MAISIE. *(Sits bench)* Don't be silly. It's the principal ingenue. All you have to do is to be yourself, and try not to act.

DELIGHT. When would I have to begin?

MAISIE. Right away. Today!

DELIGHT. *(In a panic)* Oh, I can't, Maisie. Really, I couldn't.

MAISIE. Nonsense, Baby, you must.

DELIGHT. But you don't understand. I can't, really.

MAISIE. Now let's not waste any more time.

DELIGHT. I'll go in tomorrow morning.

MAISIE. Don't you understand? It opens in a week. You'll have to rehearse night and day, as it is. You'd never have had this chance, but fortunately, the girl who was playing your part broke her leg yesterday and it was in the morning paper. It was fate that I saw it.

DELIGHT. Suppose he doesn't like me?

MAISIE. I have arranged all that. Don't sit there like that. They're waiting for you to rehearse. *(Rises, crosses* C., *puts* DELIGHT *through arch.)* Hurry! Get your hat and coat and fly! Ellen!

DELIGHT. *(In an agony of indecision, tries to put* MAISIE *off, but can find no words)* If—if—you just let me——

MAISIE. *(Firmly)* Whatever you have to say can wait until you get back. *(Crosses to sofa, gets hat and umbrella.* DELIGHT *exits to get her hat and coat.* ELLEN *enters.)*

MAISIE. *(Crosses* L.C.*)* Ellen, did my things come from the cleaner's?

ELLEN. Yes, ma'am. They are in your room.

MAISIE. *(Crosses to arch, turns)* Good! I must change—there will be a couple of people here and I want you to serve the most tempting and exciting tea that has ever been served in this house.

ELLEN. It's Thursday, Mrs. Partridge.

MAISIE. *(Stops and returns)* I know.

ELLEN. Well, I was just going over to the church——

MAISIE. Oh, not this afternoon, Ellen. You just can't. I can't manage without you.

ELLEN. Tomorrow is First Friday. I must go to my duties.

MAISIE. Tomorrow is all right, but I have never needed you as much as today.

ELLEN. I must go to confession this afternoon.

MAISIE. Well, what on earth could you—a walking saint—have to confess?

ELLEN. There is plenty on me mind.

READY DOOR SLAM.

MAISIE. Ah, Ellen! I haven't had a mouthful of food all day—and a man is coming to rent—a building from me, and if he has some of your delicious cinnamon toast, he will pay me twice as much as he expects to. Make us a little tea.

ELLEN. Well, Mrs. Partridge——

MAISIE. You know very well you can go in the morning.

ELLEN. The clergy have enough to do. They only hear people who can't get away the day before. It's no trouble for me to go Thursday. I'll say a prayer for you.

MAISIE. Oh, no! If you won't help me, don't mention my name, or I'll say I don't know you. Ellen, darling! *(*DELIGHT *comes in room by* U. *end of arch.)*

ELLEN. *(Crosses to arch)* Oh, all right. I'll get your things out anyway. *(Exits.)*

MAISIE. *(Turns)* Bless you—you never desert me.

DELIGHT. Maisie——

MAISIE. Delight, I'll be angry with you in a minute.

ELLEN. *(Off stage)* Will I get out the blue wan?

MAISIE. *(Off stage)* No, the red is more becoming.

ELLEN. *(Off stage)* I forgot to mention that the fur is off the bottom of the red something awful since——

DELIGHT. *(Following them off—desperately)* Maisie! You had better listen to me.

DOOR SLAM.

(There is the sound of a door closing down the hall, DELIGHT *returns, then silence.* DELIGHT *stands quite still, and then making up her mind, goes*

swiftly toward the front door. But as she reaches it, and opens it, she finds SYDNEY *standing on the threshold. He is "all dressed up" and has a flower in his buttonhole. With him is a strange young man.* DELIGHT *is terribly embarrassed.)*

SYDNEY. *(Coming into hall)* Hello, Delight.

DELIGHT. *(Backing into room)* Ssh! Maisie's home.

SYDNEY. I had to come— Come in, Charlie—— *(*DELIGHT *puts them into the room, crosses* D.C.*)*

DELIGHT. Go in, please. *(*CHARLIE *crosses* D.L.*)*

SYDNEY. I made a mistake. We've got to be at the City Hall by three.

DELIGHT. I suppose we ought.

SYDNEY. I beg your pardon, may I present Mr. Ludlow? Charlie, you know. He's going with us.

DELIGHT. How do you do?

CHARLIE. It's really all my fault, Miss Partridge. I had to see Philip about something very important and there was so little time, that I came along, too. Is he home?

DELIGHT. *(Crosses to arch)* I think so. I'll see. *(Exits.)*

SYDNEY. It's a crime the way they keep her excited all the time. You like her, don't you, Charlie?

CHARLIE. She's a wonder!

SYDNEY. You know she's given me her word to leave the stage. *(*PHILIP *enters.)*

PHILIP. *(Crosses to between them)* Hello, Charlie, I'm glad to see you. Hello, Sydney, what are you so dressed up about?

SYDNEY. *(Crosses to table above sofa)* Oh, do you think so? *(*PHILIP *goes* C.*)*

CHARLIE. Phil, can you go to Spain with me? I've got the commission for that bridge.

PHILIP. Gee, that's swell! I knew you'd get it. I'd love to.

CHARLIE. You'd have charge of paying off the men. Sort of timekeeper. Check them up in the morning! Check them off in the evening. There is scarcely any salary attached to it, and you would have to pay your own way over.

PHILIP. That sounds great. Gee, I hope Maisie will let me go.

CHARLIE. My God, you haven't got a wife!

SYDNEY. His mother.

CHARLIE. Oh, your mother. She may not like it, but after all you have to live your own life.

PHILIP. You see, it's—well, my father is dead.

CHARLIE. So is mine.

PHILIP. Then you know how I feel. I can't disappoint her. She wants me to be an artist, and if I don't work at it, she'll find out I hate it.

CHARLIE. Wait a minute. You are going to Spain on a sketching trip. Get me?

PHILIP. No.

SYDNEY. *(Drops* C.*)* I didn't know you had this bug, too.

PHILIP. What bug?

SYDNEY. About your mother. Delight behaves like that, but then she's a girl.

PHILIP. What do you mean?

SYDNEY. No offense, old man, but you ought to get out and decide for yourself. You don't owe everything to a parent and don't let them kid you that you do.

PHILIP. *(Turns to* CHARLIE*)* Charlie, when do you start?

CHARLIE. Oh, in a few days. We ought to make it snappy.

PHILIP. Will you come with me to Steve Applegate's office—he's my mother's lawyer, you know—and sort of—back me up?

CHARLIE. How long will it take? *(Enter* DELIGHT.*)*

PHILIP. About twenty minutes.

CHARLIE. I guess I can manage it. Come along. *(*PHILIP *goes out.)*

DELIGHT. Oh, you found him? *(Crosses to sofa.)*

CHARLIE. Listen. I'll meet you two at three. Be prompt, three by the City Hall clock. *(He and* PHILIP *exit.* DELIGHT *crosses* D.R.C. *As soon as they are alone,* SYDNEY *makes a swift move to take her in his arms.)*

SYDNEY. *(Crosses to her.)* Darling.

DELIGHT. *(Moving away from him)* Sydney, please! Someone may come in.

SYDNEY. Why, honey, what is it?

DELIGHT. Oh, Sydney, you might have known you'd run into Maisie.

SYDNEY. I hoped I would.

DELIGHT. Well, I don't. Oh, Sydney, don't hate me for what I am going to tell you.

SYDNEY. You don't love me?

DELIGHT. Oh, I do love you. That's the worst of it all. But I——

SYDNEY. Delight, I——

DELIGHT. Now, don't say anything until I have finished. Please. Sydney—when you came in—Sydney, Maisie has got me a job on the stage, and I have got to go down this minute and see about it. *(Crosses up to table. He turns to look at her. Silence.)*

SYDNEY. May I speak? Do you mean that you intend to go on? *(*DELIGHT *nods.)* Well, you won't go! You'll come with me as you promised. Let me talk to your mother. Why didn't you tell her? What kind of girl are you anyway?

DELIGHT. *(Steps to him)* All right. Blame me. Can't you understand that I have no control over this? Maisie has worked every minute of her life to

get me this opportunity, and I am not going to throw her down.

SYDNEY. You are going to throw me down instead?

DELIGHT. Wait a week or two—that isn't much to ask.

SYDNEY. And then in a week you'll put me off again. I am not going to spend the rest of my life hanging around for you to make up your mind. You gave me a promise—that you were through with the stage.

DELIGHT. I cannot disappoint Maisie.

SYDNEY. Why not be happy, Delight? Give up this agonizing for something you may not ever be. The women are happiest who lead normal protected lives.

DELIGHT. It isn't only myself I have to consider.

SYDNEY. Delight, listen to me. Your mother is a forceful, charming woman, but she will ruin your life if you let her. You can't even stand on your own feet, because she has always made you lean on her. Your mind can't do without a prop. And she does it deliberately because it keeps her young.

DELIGHT. How dare you say such things to me about my mother!

SYDNEY. Let me say them to her; I am dying for a chance.

DELIGHT. It wouldn't do any good. I have known her practically all my life, and I guess I know her better than you do. Besides, you don't understand. It's a wonderful part, and I only have to rehearse a week. Think of it. In a week I'll be on Broadway!

SYDNEY. Yeh? *For* a week.

DELIGHT. Well, anyway, Maisie will be satisfied then. Besides, I want to do it. To see if I can. Can't you understand that I *want* to do it a little?

SYDNEY. *(Crosses to window)* If you have made your choice, what have I to say?

DELIGHT. *(Turns and sits chair below sofa)* Oh, Sydney, you make me feel just terrible.

SYDNEY. *(Turns to her)* How do you think I feel? Walking around New York all day, all dressed up like Mrs. Astor's pony! *(Pause. Crosses to her. Takes out marriage license.)* Here, maybe you'd like your marriage license for a souvenir. *(He holds it out with a magnificent gesture which concludes lamely)* I wish you'd take it. I don't like just to throw it away.

DELIGHT. Oh, Sydney, aren't we ever going to use it?

SYDNEY. Not unless we use it today.

DELIGHT. You don't love me!

SYDNEY. *(Puts marriage license in pocket. Steps to her)* My God! Would I put up with all this, if I didn't love you?

DELIGHT. *(Rises)* Oh, Sydney! *(She is close to him now. He takes her in his arms.)* I don't know what to do.

SYDNEY. Let's have a little more courage, dear. Don't you see that unless we matter to each other more than anything else in the world, we don't matter at all? I'd give up anything for you, Delight. Honest I would.

DELIGHT. Yes, I know, but I don't want you to.

SYDNEY. Sweet thing! Don't you think you care enough to give up this job?

DELIGHT. Yes.

SYDNEY. Then which of us will talk to Maisie?

DELIGHT. *(Draws him to door)* I will. Only you must leave me alone with her.

SYDNEY. I'll wait in my car, at the corner, and if it is all right, you wave from the window. I'll be watching. Buck up. *(He starts out.)*

DELIGHT. *(Crosses* C.*)* I can't do it! *(*SYDNEY

stops and turns.) I can't face her! Don't make me.

SYDNEY. My God, you're a jelly-fish! Stand up for yourself. I'll wait ten minutes. *(He goes out.* DELIGHT *crosses to* C., *stands a long moment, gathering courage.* ELLEN *crosses in hall to door.)*

DELIGHT. *(In a small voice)* Maisie? *(*ELLEN *comes in. She is dressed for the street.)*

ELLEN. *(Crosses* L.C.*)* Whist, don't be calling your mother. She thinks you've left this half hour. Besides, the poor woman is in a state because the fur is off that tay gown of hers.

DELIGHT. Ellen! Ellen, what's a jelly-fish?

ELLEN. Is it possible you're almost a woman grown and you don't know what a jelly-fish is?

DELIGHT. I don't think I do, do you?

ELLEN. 'Tis just a large piece of gallumph.

DELIGHT. Of what?

ELLEN. 'Tis just a large, clear shaking mass without any head or tail—like Blanc Mange.

DELIGHT. *(Faintly— Weeps)* Oh.

ELLEN. What's the matter?

DELIGHT. Nothing. *(Crosses to her. She looks at* ELLEN *and bursts into tears, burying her head on* ELLEN'S *shoulder.)* Ellen. I love him and how can I give him up?

ELLEN. There, weep on Ellen's shoulder.

DELIGHT. Maisie thinks I haven't any pride. I haven't either.

ELLEN. Mrs. Partridge is different from most mothers. But it's natural for you to think about loving and marrying and all such. Your mother doesn't see it that way. But it's natural.

DELIGHT. *(Eagerly)* That's what I say. Ellen, is it wicked to fall in love?

ELLEN. I don't want to butt in, child, but you just foller your heart, and you can't go far wrong.

DELIGHT. Oh, Ellen, I think you are right. I'm going to try to make Maisie see how I feel.

ELLEN. Then I'll say a little prayer for you to St. Rita. She's the saint of the impossible, you know. It will all come right. You'll see.

DELIGHT. *(Embrace)* Yes, please do, Ellen. You've made me see things in a wonderful light.

ELLEN. *(Pleased. Tries to do even better)* Remember— "Let the heart speak." Will you wait a minute before you call your mother? I hope to God the delay doesn't cost me Father Cassidy. *(She goes out.)*

DELIGHT. *(Calls)* Maisie! Maisie! *(Crosses to sofa.)*

MAISIE. *(Off stage)* Is that you, darling? What happened? *(*MAISIE *comes in, sewing the fur on the end of the train of the gown she is wearing.* DELIGHT *crosses to her.)* You can't be back already?

DELIGHT. Maisie—I haven't gone. I am not going.

MAISIE. *(After a short silence)* What——?

DELIGHT. Because I—not because I don't want to, but I have given my word to do something else this afternoon.

MAISIE. What has come over you, Delight? You have never in your life done such a thing before.

DELIGHT. Well, I am sorry, but for once I have made an engagement that I intend to keep.

MAISIE. *(Crosses to her)* Keep it tomorrow. Delight, it seems to me that this engagement with Cary Adams is the most important thing in your life. You have spent at least seventeen years leading up to it.

DELIGHT. Maisie, can't you see that I am not sure that I want to go on striving and agonizing for something I may never get?

MAISIE. Of course you'll get it. That's ridicu-

lous. Of course you'll work; of course you'll strive; of course you'll agonize. Nothing happens of itself. And when you've earned it, you'll get it. And you're going to start right now. *(Crosses towards phone.)*

DELIGHT. *(Intercepting her)* Wouldn't it be better if I just lead a normal protected life and am happy?

MAISIE. You can lead a normal protected life and be happy on the stage.

DELIGHT. Hasn't it occurred to you that I might marry?

MAISIE. It has occurred to me often. At your age girls are very apt to think that they can escape life by diving into matrimony. But you can't. Wherever you find yourself you'll find that life on the job.

DELIGHT. Don't you believe in marrying and having children while you are young?

MAISIE. I do not. And I forbid you to think of marriage.

DELIGHT. Are you sorry you had us?

MAISIE. I have never decided. Of course, I adore both you and Philip, but sometimes I think I would be just as fond of you, if I had just met you somewhere. Now, in heaven's name, get down to that office and see Cary Adams. When the time comes, I hope you will make a brilliant marriage, not a stupid ordinary one like mine.

DELIGHT. That's it. "When the time comes." How will you know? If I live with you until I am ninety-nine, you'll treat me like a child. I'll go on like this with no parties and no beaux, until you decide to pick out a husband for me, and that's all the chance at life I'll ever get! *(Crosses below sofa.)*

MAISIE. I certainly will not let you rush into marriage with some young boy, who has nothing to give you. I did it. I know what I am talking about.

(Crosses to her.) It isn't only success I want for you. You must make your life count. You must be—somehow different from the run of the mill.

DELIGHT. Why do I have to be different? All I have ever wanted was to be an ordinary girl like Katy or Louise Gray. I am not different in my mind. *(*MAISIE *looks at her intently—a little weary.)*

MAISIE. Can that be true? Well, you are going to get that job with Cary Adams, if it is the last thing I am ever able to do for you. *(She moves to the telephone.)* Lenox 2300.

READY SPOT UP.

DELIGHT. *(Moves around sofa to* R. *of her)* You aren't thinking about me at all, Maisie. I have just been the model of what you thought a young girl should be.

MAISIE. That's hardly fair, Delight. Wait. *(Into telephone.)* Hello. Send a taxi for Mrs. Partridge, please. That's right. Washington Square. At once, please.

DELIGHT. You needn't order a taxi for me. I am not going.

MAISIE. *(Kneels on sofa)* I have been trying to give you something I never had, and always wanted. I tried to make a background for you.

DELIGHT. You made me conspicuous! You dressed me up from the time I started school like a little French child, in dresses a foot and a half too short, and I was ashamed of my long bare legs! With every other child in the class in blue serge Peter Thompsons. *(Falls sobbing into armchair* R.*)*

MAISIE. I sat up all night, often, to make those dresses, Delight.

DELIGHT. *(Rises)* But they made me conspicuous! When I was fourteen, and you had enough money to send me to Miss Bennett's dancing school —I went in a Lanvin frock to my ankles! Do you

know what the girls used to say about me? That my mother was a dressmaker and used me for a sample. I sat in a corner and hated you.

SPOT UP.

MAISIE. Oh! *(Sits stool.)* Do you mean to say that all you remember of all those years is a rose-colored dancing frock and that you didn't have a Peter Thompson?

DELIGHT. Of course not, Maisie. That is not what I mean at all. Those things are just—just symbolic.

MAISIE. Oh, Delight!

DELIGHT. And my name! Whatever possessed you to give me a name like that? It sounds like some kind of candy.

MAISIE. I did it to prevent jealousy in the family and—but you wouldn't understand.

DELIGHT. No. We don't understand each other. I am not like you, Maisie, that's all. *(Crosses below sofa.)* You are an individual, and are full of ideas, and equal rights, and ambition. *(Sits chair below sofa.)* I think you are wonderful, and I know how hard you have worked to give Philip and me all the things—all the things you have given us—but I want a chance at life and love.

MAISIE. *(Draws stool to her)* Delight, I was your age once. I haven't forgotten. I married your father because I loved him, because his hair curled off his forehead . . . I married him, and I went to live in a great dark house, full of great dark furniture and all his relations. *(Bitterly)* He loved me so much that he had chosen me out of all the world to bear their illustrious name. To be the mother of his children; but he didn't love me enough to kick his relations out. That had never been done in his family. When I had been married a few months, I took a dull old walnut chair that had been in the family for countless generations and I painted

it bright red. They were all so angry that I was afraid. I was afraid for the six years that I lived in that house. And when your father died, I crept up to the attic to get away from them for a minute. And there was that gay red lacquer chair. And I sat on the floor beside it all night, just holding on to it, and trying to remember what I was like when I had first come to live there—and to recall, if I could, enough of that bravery to get myself and you children away from that gloomy respectability. And when it was dawn, I got you both and we came away. I swore then that I would keep us all free. so long as the world should last, and that I would give you each a weapon to defend that freedom, so help me God! *(There is a pause.)*

READY SPOT DOWN.

DELIGHT. Is that why you won't let me marry——?

MAISIE. Don't you understand? Doesn't what I've told you mean anything?

DELIGHT. I'm sorry, of course, but I don't see what it has to do with me.

MAISIE. You are only a child with a broken doll.

DELIGHT. Well, perhaps you never had a doll that was broken.

MAISIE. The floor is covered with saw-dust.

DELIGHT. Maisie, you keep talking about freedom. Why should I have to take this job—if I am free?

MAISIE. *(Rises)* Oh, because I say so! This one thing, this job—it is the last thing I will ever offer you. After that you may choose for yourself. *(Crosses to window.)* *SPOT DOWN.*

DELIGHT. I'll—I can't, Maisie.

MAISIE. You must. I know I am right. There is no way out. *(She looks out of the window for the taxi.)* Why doesn't that taxi— My God, there's

that Armitage boy. *(Calls)* Armitage! Armitage! *(She nods and waves.)*

DELIGHT. *(Rises, steps* L. *of sofa)* Oh, Maisie, don't call him! If you want me to go, don't call him. I warn you.

MAISIE. Nonsense. You have got to get down. If it is the last thing I do on earth. *(Crosses* L., *exits—opens door.)* Besides, he was half way up here, before I had called him a second time. *(Re-enters. Crosses* L.C.*)* Does he park there every day waiting for a kind word?

DELIGHT. Maisie, you don't know what you've done. You've ruined my life—twice! *(*SYDNEY *dashes in.)*

SYDNEY. *(Crosses to* MAISIE*)* Oh, Mrs. Partridge, is it all right? I don't know what to say——

MAISIE. Wait. We want you to do us a favor. Delight has to get up town—and she is afraid she will be late, so . . .

DELIGHT. *(Fiercely)* Leave me out of it!

MAISIE. So, I throw myself upon your courtesy. Will you take her up to Cary Adams' office?

SYDNEY. No, Mrs. Partridge, I won't.

DELIGHT. *(Drops* D.R.C.*)* If you make a scene, I'll never speak to you again.

SYDNEY. I'd rather die than take her one step of the way to get a job. You wondered, perhaps, why I was waiting at the corner— Well, Delight promised me that today—— *(*DELIGHT, *with a despairing cry, flings herself upon him and puts her hands over his mouth.)*

MAISIE. *(Horrified)* Why, Delight!

DELIGHT. *(Turns to* MAISIE*)* Oh, Sydney, shut up! Don't pay any attention to him, Maisie. Come with me, Sydney, I'll explain.

SYDNEY. *(Struggling to free himself)* We had better get it settled.

DELIGHT. *(Dragging him out)* It is settled.

MRS. PARTRIDGE PRESENTS

See Page 69

MAISIE. *(Icily)* This is quite ridiculous and useless. If you haven't time to take Delight to her appointment, would you be kind enough to put her into a taxi? *(She exits without a glance at either of them. They stare at each other.)*

DELIGHT. You've fixed everything now.

SYDNEY. If you take this job, I'm through.

DELIGHT. *(Haughtily)* See if I care. I'm going by myself. *(She dashes out, colliding in the doorway with* STEPHEN *and* PHILIP.*)* Excuse me. *(She exits.)*

SYDNEY. *(Hastily following)* I beg your pardon, but I must—— *(He is gone, almost upsetting* STEPHEN.*)*

PHILIP. *(U.L. by arch)* This room with every seat occupied can be emptied in less than three minutes.

STEPHEN. *(Crosses* L.C.*)* Friends of yours? *(*PHILIP *leaves his cap in the hall and crosses to him.)*

PHILIP. *(Shyly)* Steve, I can't thank you enough. I—I count myself pretty lucky to have you for a friend.

STEPHEN. 'S all right. Will you find your mother for me like a good boy?

PHILIP. Sure thing.

STEPHEN. Oh, by the way, you never told me how your mother took this idea of yours. This Spanish thing, I mean.

PHILIP. Good Lord, have I been talking all this time for nothing? Steve, that was the point of the whole business. *You* are to get her to let me go.

STEPHEN. Am I? Now, Philip, I really didn't understand that she hadn't been told at all. *(Musingly)* You know this La Fleur is coming next week. It's a great venture. Your mother is naturally worried about the outcome. But it will be a great thing for her, I think, a great thing.

PHILIP. Lord, I hope so.

STEPHEN. Do you think it's fair to go now? Oh, don't you think she'll miss you terribly? Six months is a long time.

PHILIP. Aw, Stephen, you have thought it over and decided against me. All right, I'll let you off. You needn't help me.

STEPHEN. I was only thinking of your mother. I am quite willing to help you. Everything I have is yours. I mean it.

PHILIP. I didn't mean the money either.

STEPHEN. *(Turns to sofa and sits)* But I'll do my best. You go find her and I'll think of some way to tell her. *(*PHILIP *exits.* STEPHEN *takes some letters from his pocket, examines them.)*

PHILIP. *(Returns, crosses to* STEPHEN C.*)* Steve!!

STEPHEN. What is it?

PHILIP. Something is wrong. She sounded kind of funny—almost as if she was about to cry.

STEPHEN. Maisie! Cry?

PHILIP. Yes, can you understand it? Something terrible must have happened. You don't suppose she heard about Spain, do you? *(Sits stool.)*

STEPHEN. No, I don't think so. No, it isn't that. Did she say anything?

PHILIP. Yes, I said you were here, and she said she'd be right out. She looked white and funny. Steve, perhaps you'd better not say anything today —about me, I mean.

STEPHEN. You're right. Leave it to me. I'll fix it later, when I get a chance.

PHILIP. And tell her that if she doesn't want me to go, I won't, but that we have reserved passage. And tell her what a nice fellow Charlie is.

STEPHEN. Yes. Yes. She'll let you go. You and your sister have had everything you ever wanted. If you'd only stick at Art . . .

PHILIP. Steve, I don't dislike painting, but I hate Art Schools. I hate artists, for that matter. I want to see the world.

STEPHEN. You and Delight have been all over Europe.

PHILIP. With Maisie! Between the spring and summer openings. Do you honestly think that is what I want? I don't want to be rushed like that. Maisie hurries me so. It's the same thing about my life. All I ask is to be left alone. I may turn out to be anything if I can only get a chance. *(He sees that* STEPHEN *has not heard him.)* You haven't paid a minute's attention to me. If you'll listen for a second, I'll tell you something I have had on my mind for a long time.

STEPHEN. *(Turning)* Well?

PHILIP. It would make everything a lot simpler for me, if you and Maisie would get married.

STEPHEN. What are you talking about? Where did you get that idea?

PHILIP. I don't want to seem mushy, but I'm old enough to see how you feel about Maisie, and how she feels about you.

STEPHEN. Phil, I'll tell you something. I've been trying to get Maisie to marry me for ten years. She won't. She never will. — That settles that. Let's stick to your troubles from now on.

PHILIP. Don't ask her. Tell her. Just arrange everything and fix it so she thinks it's her idea. *(Rises, moves up.)* It would certainly be a great help to me.

STEPHEN. Sorry. I'd like to help you out, but that's all settled long ago. *(*MAISIE *enters—*STEPHEN *rises.)*

MAISIE. *(Crosses* D.C.*)* What's all settled long ago? *(They both turn guiltily.)*

STEPHEN. *(Rises)* Oh, Maisie, I came as quickly as I could after you telephoned.

PHILIP. *(Indicates armchair* U.L.C.*)* Here's a chair, Maisie.

MAISIE. Thank you, my darling. What's all settled?

STEPHEN. Hanged if I can remember what we were talking about. Can you, Phil?

PHILIP. *(Crosses* D.L.C.*)* Search me. Well, so long. (PHILIP *exits.* STEPHEN *looks at* MAISIE *with solicitude.* MAISIE *crosses to window.)*

STEPHEN. Maisie, what was it?

MAISIE. I just face a blank wall.

STEPHEN. Maisie, what's a blank wall?

MAISIE. Everything—everywhere I turn. It's Delight. Poor child. I've hurt her; I've been unfair to her for a long time. But today, I think, I've given her something that will make it all up to her. I've gotten her a job in a new play. Oh, Lord, I've got to tell you—I'm afraid to begin. In order to get the part, I had to put some money into the theatre. *(Sits armchair* U.L.C.*)*

STEPHEN. Oh, Maisie, you didn't . . .

MAISIE. Wait, you don't understand. I can't go on with the La Fleur proposition. I've planned it very carefully. If I can get Toddhunter to take the building that will make it possible to buy La Fleur off.

STEPHEN. Maisie, Toddhunter doesn't want the building now.

MAISIE. Oh!

STEPHEN. And you certainly have to go ahead with La Fleur. She's sailed already. The opening is next week—you've sent out the invitations—you can't throw it over—it isn't possible.

READY PHONE.

MAISIE. All right, I didn't want to throw it over. But I don't see how I'll ever get through.

STEPHEN. *(Sits bench)* Wait a minute. How much money did you put into this play?

WARN CURTAIN.

MAISIE. Stephen, I've put in everything—every cent I had in the world.

STEPHEN. Oh, Maisie, you know you may never get a cent of it back. Why? Why?

MAISIE. Because I had to find a job—for Delight. She wasn't happy. I saw she must have something to distract her—something big—this job—and because I'd rather lose all I have than to have Delight spoil her life as I spoiled mine—marry the first young man she thinks she's in love with——

STEPHEN. *(Rises, crosses* D.L.*)* What danger was there of that? Good heavens, if you mean Armstead, every time I've seen them together, they were quarreling like brother and sister. *(Paces* U. *and* D.L.*)*

MAISIE. You've seen them together?

STEPHEN. Yes, several times—on the Avenue—at the Brevoort——

MAISIE. *(Rises, steps to him)* Then she *has* been seeing him?

STEPHEN. Didn't you know?

MAISIE. No! That's what she meant when she talked of marriage! That's what he was doing standing over there on the corner! Oh, what a fool I've been! *I* sent them off together just now! *(Crosses* R.*)* She'll never go to Cary Adams' office. *(Crosses up back of sofa, turns towards him.)* She disobeyed me once, why not now when everything depends on it? Oh, what a fool! *(Drops to below sofa.)* She'll marry the fool boy and spend her whole life being sorry. She'll never go to that office, never, never, never! *(Phone rings. Pause. Phone rings.* MAISIE *sits in chair below sofa. Pause. Phone rings.* MAISIE *rises, crosses to phone and takes off receiver,* L. *of table.)* Hello! Yes, Mr. Adams—I

told you she'd be charming. Then everything's all settled? Thank you for calling. *(Hangs up phone, turns* C.*)* She got there. She's going to do the part! *(Crosses to him,* D.L.C.*)* I've saved her, Stephen. Oh, thank God. *(Takes his handkerchief out of his pocket, wiping her eyes.)* I've saved her!

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE: *The hat shop.*

TIME: *The following week. Remodeled floor of the new building.*

AT RISE: *The curtain rises on an empty stage. Presently* KATHERINE *wanders in* R., *looks about, sees slipper chair* R.C., *smiles, sits in it, gurgles again, rises and going to cupboard doors, knocks. Receiving no reply she knocks again. Then opening the doors, she says:*

KATHERINE. Mrs. Partridge—— *(Starts to pass through what she thinks is a door to another room, when she discovers her mistake and closes the door. She crosses to the door* U.R. *and is about to knock, when she sees a man's hat on the chair* D.L., *and going to it, picks it up to look inside.)*

(Enter R., PETE, *carrying a small dressing table, which he sets before a little chair* D.R.C. *and exits* R. *Following him in is* MISS HAMILTON, *who spies* KATHERINE *and crossing* C., *speaks to her.)*

MISS HAMILTON. Pardon me, but this shop is not open to the public until tomorrow.

KATHERINE. *(Looking into hat)* I was just looking for Mrs. Partridge.

MISS HAMILTON. Mrs. Partridge hasn't been in yet this morning, Miss Everitt. It is Miss Everitt, isn't it?

KATHERINE. *(Sets down hat)* Oh, you saw my picture in the Sunday paper. Wasn't it dreadful? Cute of the dog, though. (MISS HAMILTON *looks at her severely.)* Oh, has Miss Partridge been here yet this morning? *(Crosses to her.)*

MISS HAMILTON. I really couldn't say. *(Turns to poudreuse and opens it.)*

KATHERINE. She told me to meet her here before her dress rehearsal.

MISS HAMILTON. Did she? *(Crosses up to cupboard and opens it and looks over the shelves.)*

KATHERINE. Yessem. Where are the new hats? May I see some of them, please?

MISS HAMILTON. I'm so sorry. They arrive with Mme. La Fleur this afternoon.

KATHERINE. (MISS HAMILTON *closes cupboard and turns)* Oh, for heaven's sake! Oh, I must tell Mrs. Partridge—— I have a wonderful idea for a spring opening.

MISS HAMILTON. Tomorrow's?

KATHERINE. No, any spring. Oh, by the way, tell me—is that Jenny dress marked down any further?

MISS HAMILTON. *(Drops* D.C.*)* Shall we go and see? And there is a little Lanvin frock I think might suit you. It has the new coat of mail trimming.

KATHERINE. Coat of mail—I haven't the remotest need for anything like that.

MISS HAMILTON. Still one can always use a Lanvin, can't one?

KATHERINE. Well, I shouldn't be extravagant. You see, my mother's aunt died last winter and left me—some money and I ran straight through it. *(Crosses to window.)* So I guess my family will die if I bring anything else home. *(Crosses* U.L.*)*

MISS HAMILTON. Wouldn't you like to see the little frock?

KATHERINE. *(Crosses to her)* Well, I suppose I might as well look at it.

MISS HAMILTON. Was that Jenny you spoke of the one with the ceinture?

KATHERINE. Well, now, let me see—yes, yes, it did have a—a very pretty one.

MISS HAMILTON. I'm so sorry. I sold that myself this morning. Just gave it away.

KATHERINE. Gave it away! Why, I was going to buy it. *(Enter* CLEMENTINE U.L.*)*

CLEMENTINE. *(Crosses to* MISS HAMILTON*)* I beg your pardon, Miss Hamilton, but will you please come upstairs into the workrooms? Mrs. Partridge told me to take those dresses to the theatre, and they aren't finished yet.

MISS HAMILTON. Miss Delight's dresses, you mean?

CLEMENTINE. Yes! For the dress rehearsal. It starts at twelve o'clock. I wouldn't bother you, but I'm afraid they will never have that dress for the last act ready in time.

KATHERINE. *(A step in)* She wanted me to see that one. I said to her, "Delight, whatever your mother says is sure to be all right." But I think you kind of like to have a friend around.

MISS HAMILTON. Yes, indeed. Clementine, will you take Miss Everitt to Miss Rose? I want her to see that Lanvin frock.

CLEMENTINE. Miss Hamilton!

MISS HAMILTON. We'll all have to wait until Mrs. Partridge comes. Miss Rose will show you everything, Miss Everitt. *(Takes* CLEMENTINE U.R.C.*)*

KATHERINE. *(Sits* L.C.*)* Oh, well now, don't trouble.

MISS HAMILTON. Oh, no trouble. She'll be glad to show you. *(Enter* STEPHEN R.*)*

STEPHEN. Good morning, Miss Hamilton.

MISS HAMILTON. Good morning, Mr. Applegate.

STEPHEN. *(Crosses to* D.R.C.*)* Hello, Katy.

KATHERINE. *(Rises, crosses to him and shakes hands)* Oh, good morning, Mr. Applegate. Oh,—*(Turning to look at the hat again)*—that was your hat.

STEPHEN. Yes. And I shall have to get a new one tomorrow.

KATHERINE. Umm. Yes, I see what you mean. Well, good-bye, Mr. Applegate. *(Crossing to door* R.*)* I should have bought that Jenny. *(Exit* R. *with* CLEMENTINE.*)*

MISS HAMILTON. Did you get Mrs. Partridge?

STEPHEN. No, I telephoned her house, but they said she was already on her way here. *(Enter* MAISIE U.L., *followed by* DELIGHT *with part.)*

MAISIE. Hello, Stephen. *(Crosses* C. DELIGHT *moves to window.)*

STEPHEN. Maisie! I've been waiting hours.

MAISIE. I'm sorry, Stephen. Delight and I are just on our way to the dress rehearsal. Miss Hamilton, it is really beginning to look very well. I congratulate you. You're a wonder.

STEPHEN. Hello, Delight.

MISS HAMILTON. Is there anything else you want me to do especially?

MAISIE. No, you just go ahead and do everything your own way. I am going with Delight to her dress rehearsal. Oh, aren't we going to have any curtains there?

MISS HAMILTON. They promised them for ten thirty. I expect them any minute.

MAISIE. I think perhaps you had better telephone. *(Exit* MISS HAMILTON R.*)*

DELIGHT. *(Crosses to poudreuse)* Maisie, I like this.

MAISIE. *(*DELIGHT *sits at poudreuse)* Isn't it

sweet? I want to get one for your room. *(*MAISIE *closes poudreuse.)* Stephen, here's a wireless saying she arrives this afternoon. *(*MAISIE *crosses to* STEPHEN. *Enter* CLEMENTINE R.*)*

CLEMENTINE. Oh, Mrs. Partridge, I'm so glad you came.

MAISIE. What are you doing here?

CLEMENTINE. They haven't finished that last act dress and I wondered if you had rather have me go on to the theatre with the dresses for the first two acts, or wait for the last act one.

MAISIE. Do you mean they haven't finished that yellow dress yet? What do they mean by holding me up? They can hold up other people, but how dare they try it on me! Who's in charge of the workrooms? *(Exeunt* MAISIE *with* CLEMENTINE U.L. DELIGHT *crosses* U. *to cupboard.)*

STEPHEN. *(*L. *of chair* L.C.*)* Do you like your part?

DELIGHT. *(Crosses* D. *to poudreuse)* Yes, very much.

STEPHEN. I am sure you'll be very good—your mother says so. I'm coming to see you tomorrow night.

DELIGHT. Are you? You are coming with Maisie, you mean?

STEPHEN. Yes—what kind of flowers do you like?

DELIGHT. I don't like any—I mean you mustn't send me any, if that's what you're thinking of.

STEPHEN. Why not?

DELIGHT. Because you don't think I'm any good.

STEPHEN. Why, of course I do. I think you are going to be fine. Your mother tells me you have improved tremendously.

DELIGHT. You don't have to pretend to me. I know what you think. You think I'll never be an

actress and you think I'd be better off if I found it out. *(Sits at poudreuse.)*

STEPHEN. Delight! Why, what gave you that idea? Do you want to know what I think? *(Crosses to her.)* I think you are a very brave child, to have stuck at this job and to have done so well with it, feeling as I know you must have felt, all this week.

DELIGHT. I'll get through—some way.

STEPHEN. That's right. You just be patient and work hard. Whatever you really want, you'll get.

DELIGHT. Oh, that's all over. He's kept his word—he hasn't even tried to see me. He'll never speak to me again. If I had it to do over again, Maisie or anybody else wouldn't keep me from doing what I should have done all along.

STEPHEN. I was trying to say, that if you are meant to be an actress you'll be one—if you are not——

DELIGHT. I understand you. You think I've made a mess of my life. You think I'll never make an actress—don't you?

STEPHEN. Why, even if I did—I shouldn't say—— *(Crosses* D.L. *to* DELIGHT. STEPHEN *crosses* U.L. *and* D.L. *Enter* MAISIE U.L., *followed by* CLEMENTINE *with dress boxes. Crosses to arch* R.*)*

MAISIE. Sorry to keep you waiting all this time, Stephen, but I've got to stay here. Delight, dear, here are your dresses for the first two acts. They haven't finished the other and I am going to stay until they do and then I'll bring it along with me when I come. You had better hurry. Clementine, get a cab, and Clementine, don't stand around the stage while Miss Delight is rehearsing. I'll buy you tickets for the opening.

CLEMENTINE. Thank you, Mrs. Partridge, you can count on me. *(Exit* CLEMENTINE R.*)*

MAISIE. Delight, I'll be there before you begin

to see to everything. Now you won't forget what I've told you, will you, dear? You're going to be wonderful.

DELIGHT. I'll be all right. Don't you worry about me, Maisie.

MAISIE. Good-bye, baby, see you at the theatre.

DELIGHT. When Katy comes, bring her down to the theatre with you. *(Exit* R.*)*

MAISIE. That'll be pleasant. The rehearsal begins at twelve, doesn't it?

DELIGHT. *(Off stage)* Yes.

MAISIE. *(Cross below chair* L.C.*)* Well, I have forty-five minutes. She's been wonderful, Stephen, she has worked like a little Trojan. You see, I was right. It was only work she needed. I think she'll get away with it.

STEPHEN. Of course she will.

MAISIE. *(Sits* L.C.*)* What's the news?

STEPHEN. *(Step to her)* It's all right, my dear. I've fixed up that mortgage.

MAISIE. Oh, Stephen, how marvelous—$10,000?

STEPHEN. No, unfortunately, they could only make it $7,500.

MAISIE. Anything's a Godsend. I can do it on that—oh, easily. Oh, Stephen, what *would* I do without you?

STEPHEN. Maisie, you shouldn't have to face these things alone. I don't do so badly at law. For the twentieth time, Maisie, won't you marry me?

MAISIE. I don't dare, Stephen.

STEPHEN. Do you trust me so little?

MAISIE. It isn't you—it isn't me—it's the children. I must leave them free—even of you, Stephen.

STEPHEN. Have I nothing to offer you, Maisie?

MAISIE. It is I that have so little for you, Stephen. How can I confess this? But while you were talking, I was thinking, "I've saved my child—

the agony, the despair of this last week has been worth going through, if I've saved her independence for her."

STEPHEN. Maisie, I'm willing to come second.

MAISIE. Third, Stephen. There's Philip. *(Enter* MISS HAMILTON R. *with card—crosses to her.)* No, you deserve more than that.

MISS HAMILTON. There's a young man waiting to see you. He's very insistent, so I told him I'd bring you his card.

MAISIE. *(Taking card)* Show—Mr. Armstead in here. *(Exit* MISS HAMILTON R.*)* It's that young man of Delight's. Oh, what made me say that! You know who I mean.

STEPHEN. I know. Do you want to see him alone?

MAISIE. No! Yes, I guess so. Go look at the new workrooms. (STEPHEN *crosses* U. *to door* L. *of her.)* Don't stay longer than five minutes, though. I can't waste any time on him. And Stephen, don't think your safe arms are no temptation to me, because they are.

STEPHEN. Please risk it.

MAISIE. Come back and interrupt me, like a darling. Remember, five minutes. *(Exit* STEPHEN U.L. MAISIE *drops to* L. *of chair* L.C. *Enter* SYDNEY R.*)*

SYDNEY. How do you do, Mrs. Partridge?

MAISIE. *(Sits* L.C.*)* Sit down, please. I can unfortunately only spare you a few minutes.

SYDNEY. *(Sits above poudreuse)* I came to ask you, what your objections are to me.

MAISIE. I beg your pardon?

SYDNEY. Why won't you let me marry your daughter?

MAISIE. As this is the first time I recall your mentioning the subject, and as you are practically a

stranger to both of us, you can understand my surprise.

SYDNEY. Then I ask you not to ruin both our lives.

MAISIE. Well, I don't know that I am responsible for your life, Mr. Armstead, and I can assure you that my daughter has not given the matter any thought at all.

SYDNEY. Mrs. Partridge, may I be frank?

MAISIE. And brief, Mr. Armstead.

SYDNEY. Last week Delight promised to marry me.

MAISIE. You will forgive me if I doubt that?

SYDNEY. I could give you proof—but that doesn't matter. Grant for the sake of argument that she wanted to marry me, isn't it true that you would try to prevent it?

MAISIE. Yes. Delight is too young to marry.

SYDNEY. But I—— *(Rises.)* Do you realize what you are doing to both of us? You don't know what a week I've been through. *(Step to her.)*

MAISIE. Pardon me if I seem unkind. What I am opposed to is not Delight's marriage at all, but her marriage to you.

SYDNEY. Why?

MAISIE. Really, Mr. Armstead, I hardly think it is necessary to go into that.

SYDNEY. I beg your pardon. I think it is necessary! I've got a good name. I may not be brilliant, but I'm honest. My people were in the Revolution. I've got money enough for Delight to stop this stage foolishness and be the mother of my children. I have——

MAISIE. The mother of your children! That is certainly something to look forward to. You come complacently offering to take away Delight's right to work and life and adventure in exchange for the

hum-drum respectability that you present. *(Rises.)* If you came to my door with a knapsack on your back, and a dream in your eyes, and asked for Delight to go roaming over the world with you, to share your dream, I would say yes, gladly. I would ask no more than that. But my dear young man, there are dozens, thousands of nice young men, all like you, that Delight could meet and think she loved. And her life with any one of them would be exactly the same as her life with you. I mean by that, no life at all, but a well-fed evasion of it!

SYDNEY. I think you are a dangerous woman, Mrs. Partridge. It is women like you who are undermining society; who have swept aside in a single generation all that it has taken men centuries to build. A woman like you would leave her home, her husband, her children, without so much as a backward glance, for what she calls her freedom. Excuse my saying so, but it's downright Bolshevism!

MAISIE. Excuse my saying so, but I am very busy.

SYDNEY. All right. I'm going. *(Turns to poudrense and takes hat. Turns below it.)* But I give you fair warning, Mrs. Partridge, *where* I'm going is to marry your daughter.

MAISIE. Thank you so much for the warning, Mr. Armstead.

SYDNEY. You're welcome, I'm sure! *(Exit* R. *Pause. After a brief pause, enter* MISS HAMILTON.*)*

MISS HAMILTON. *(Crosses* D.C.*)* I beg your pardon, Mrs. Partridge, but could you spare me a moment? I have something I would like to ask you.

MAISIE. *(Straightening picture on back wall)* Why, of course, what is it?

MISS HAMILTON. Will you tell me something to tell the cashier? He is very much worried over

those painter's bills and Hodgson is very insistent that he be paid immediately.

MAISIE. *(Crosses* D.L. *of her)* It's going to be all right. Mr. Applegate has fixed up something for me at the bank, and you tell the cashier that I'll have some money for him first thing in the morning.

MISS HAMILTON. Thank you, Mrs. Partridge. I'm so glad. *(Exit* R. *Knock on door* U.L.*)*

STEPHEN. *(Off* L.*)* Time's up. (MAISIE *opens door and admits him as* PHILIP *enters* R.*)*

PHILIP. Hello, Maisie. *(To* STEPHEN) Have you told her?

MAISIE. Told me what?

STEPHEN. *(Above chair* L.C.*)* Give me a little time. It's nothing, Maisie, really.

PHILIP. *(*L. *of poudreuse)* Nothing important. That's a new sofa, isn't it?

MAISIE. What is it, Philip? *(To* STEPHEN) What should he have told me?

PHILIP. Stephen told me an hour ago, he would tell you all about it by the time I got here. You see the time is getting so short—I didn't want to worry you——

MAISIE. So short, yes?

PHILIP. Oh, it's nothing, really. I—I thought if you hadn't made your plans for the summer, I'd ask you to leave me out. You see, I planned a little trip. I didn't want to leave you until everything was running smoothly, but everything is all right, isn't it?

MAISIE. Yes. What kind of a trip?

PHILIP. Oh, a—a trip.

MAISIE. But, what kind of a trip?

PHILIP. A sort of a sketching trip.

MAISIE. A *sort* of a sketching trip?

STEPHEN. *(Crosses to above them)* You clear out, Phil, and let me explain to your mother.

MAISIE. *(Steps to* PHILIP*)* No. Let him tell me. Why should he be afraid to tell me? Where are you going? Where is he going? *(Moves* U.R. *of* STEPHEN.*)*

PHILIP. Only to Spain.

MAISIE. Spain. With whom?

PHILIP. With an awfully nice fellow, Maisie. Charlie Ludlow, he's a friend of Syd Armstead's.

MAISIE. A friend of——

PHILIP. *(Quickly)* Steve knows him.

STEPHEN. Yes, he's all right.

PHILIP. Stephen was going to tell you last week, but——

MAISIE. You've planned this for a week! Why didn't you come to me at once? How could you keep it from me?

PHILIP. You had enough to worry you.

MAISIE. Philip, you could tell Stephen and not tell me?

PHILIP. He's a man. He understands, Maisie.

MAISIE. And after all, you're a man, too, my son. Oh, Philip, must you go?

PHILIP. I've got my ticket and everything. Say the word and I'll chuck it of course, but it seems a shame to miss it. Maisie, you don't know what it will mean to me.

MAISIE. Oh, but I do! It's all right, dear. I want you to—I want you always to do what is best for you.

PHILIP. And you don't mind?

MAISIE. I'll miss you of course, but I won't *mind*. And you won't be gone so long anyway.

PHILIP. No. About six months.

MAISIE. Six months, oh——

PHILIP. Maybe less. Whenever the bridge is finished.

MAISIE. The bridge?

PHILIP. Gee, didn't I tell you? You see, Ludlow's an engineer.

MAISIE. An engineer?

PHILIP. I'm going to help him build the bridge. I've come to the conclusion that a man should work out of doors. That's the way to live.

MAISIE. You don't mean you'd like to be an—what about your painting?

PHILIP. I'm taking along the old sketch book. *(Taking it from his pocket.)* See, right beside my ticket. I can do that on the side, anyway.

MAISIE. Oh, perhaps you can. I had a notion that one should give one's whole life to it.

PHILIP. Well, the way I look at it is this, Maisie. I want to work, not just sit on the side and daub paint on a blank canvas.

MAISIE. I see. It seems like that to you. Why daub on a canvas at all?

PHILIP. I don't know. I guess because it was always expected of me. We always do what's expected of us, don't we?

MAISIE. Only till something wakes us up! Philip, wake up! And tell your mother the truth. Do you want to be an artist? If you could do only one thing in the world, only one thing, as long as you lived—would it be painting?

PHILIP. *(Considers)* No. I think—no.

MAISIE. Then do only one thing for me. Don't be an artist on the side. Philip, I couldn't bear a child of mine to be an artist on the side. Give me that sketch book. *(She takes it and tosses it on the sofa.)* Now, my son, go and be a good engineer.

PHILIP. Say, I think you're an angel.

MAISIE. *(Crosses above him to above poudreuse)* All right. You can think so. When do you leave?

PHILIP. Tomorrow. We thought it was a good chance to see Quebec, too. It's out of the way a

little, but we plan to spend a week there and sail from Halifax. I'll tell you everything tonight. *(Enter* MISS HAMILTON *with curtains folded over her arm.)*

MAISIE. What have you got there?

MISS HAMILTON. It's the curtains. I thought I'd bring them right up.

MAISIE. Those are not my curtains. They're horrible. *(Sits. Weeps.)*

MISS HAMILTON. I thought they were lovely.

MAISIE. They're horrible. Take them away. Take them away. They're not the color, they're not the color at all.

MISS HAMILTON. Oh, yes, they are. See— *(Turning back a piece.)* That's only the lining.

MAISIE. Why didn't you say so in the first place? Give me a handkerchief.

MISS HAMILTON. *(Giving her handkerchief)* Shall I hang them now?

MAISIE. Yes, please do. (MISS HAMILTON *lays curtains on chair* D.R. *and exits* R.)

STEPHEN. Come, come, don't cry about a little thing like that. It isn't worth it.

MAISIE. Not worth it. My reputation depends on it. I have always been noted for my nuances of color. Stephen, you have no heart. *(Enter* R. PETE *and* SAM, *carrying stepladder; they cross to window, set up the ladder preparatory to hanging the curtains.* MISS HAMILTON *follows them in, takes curtains from chair* D.R. *and crosses to them.)* Oh, good. Now I can see the curtains hung before I go to the dress rehearsal. *(Rises.)*

STEPHEN. I'd better go and order a cab for you. *(Exit* STEPHEN R.)

PHILIP. Maisie, I guess I'm in the way here. I'd better beat it. (PHILIP *starts for the door* R., *and* KATHERINE *enters* R.)

KATHERINE. *(*MAISIE *crosses to window* L.*)* Hello, hello, Phil. Wait a minute, if you're going out. I'll go with you. Hello, Mrs. Partridge.

MAISIE. Hello, Katy.

KATHERINE. When I come into this shop again —I'll just look till I find you. I don't know how it happens, no matter what I come in for—I find myself buying clothes. I just bought two dresses and sent the bill to my father.

MAISIE. Miss Hamilton, you've forgotten the tie backs.

MISS HAMILTON. I'll get them. *(Crosses* R. *and exit* R.*)*

KATHERINE. I'm on my way to see Delight. I thought you might want to come with me. Louise Grey and I were shopping this morning and everybody we met had something to say about your opening tomorrow. Everybody is coming, the minute the doors are open.

PHILIP. I'm not going to wait, Katy. *(Enter* MISS HAMILTON R. *with tie backs and cross* L.*)*

MAISIE. Philip, come and hold this ladder. *(*PHILIP *crosses to ladder, holding it* U.L.*)*

KATHERINE. What a lot you've accomplished just this morning! When I came in yesterday I thought you'd never get it done. But you are almost ready. Oh, my, what heavenly curtains!

PHILIP. Katy, stop tormenting Maisie.

KATHERINE. I think you're wonderful! If I had a dress rehearsal my mother would have been out of her mind and she would never have left my side. Aren't you excited, Mrs. Partridge? I am. Philip, you old stick, why aren't you excited? *(Crosses* C.*)*

MAISIE. Philip, go and see if Stephen has that taxi waiting. *(*PHILIP *crosses* R. *Exit* PHILIP R.*)*

KATHERINE. The hats in the afternoon and De-

light's play in the evening. Louise says she'll be a sensation. That she's the most attractive woman in Paris. I mean La Fleur, not Delight. Everybody raves about her hats. I never had one to fit my head. I suppose she speaks mostly French and I took more Latin at school. But you hardly ever run into anyone who speaks Latin. (PETE *and* SAM *have finished hanging the curtains and have taken the ladder out* R. MISS HAMILTON *has finished arranging them, and goes out* U.L. *Enter* DELIGHT *and* SYDNEY R. *Crosses to above poudreuse.)*

DELIGHT. Maisie!

MAISIE. *(Turning)* Why—Delight.

DELIGHT. I have a shock for you. I'm married, Maisie.

KATHERINE. *(Crosses to him)* Well, I congratulate you, Sydney. You certainly married a lovely girl. Delight is one of my dearest friends. Well, isn't this romantic? I'm so glad for your sake, Mrs. Partridge. Let me know the moment I can come and see you. I just must telephone. *(Crosses* R. *Exits* R.*)*

SYDNEY. Please understand why I did it——

MAISIE. What have you to do with me?

SYDNEY. After all——

MAISIE. You gave me fair warning, eh? Delight, have you forgotten that there is a dress rehearsal? You must get back to the theatre at once.

DELIGHT. *(A step to her)* But, Maisie, you don't understand. I'm married, Maisie. And I'm never going on the stage again.

MAISIE. You marry a boy you've known six months and the nineteen years we've worked and struggled—oh, Delight, you had no right to do this.

DELIGHT. I have a right to give up my ambition for the man I love.

MAISIE. You have no right to marry a boy who has nothing to give you.

DELIGHT. Why, Maisie, he's a millionaire—he's given me——

MAISIE. I'm not talking of money, possessions——

DELIGHT. What more could I have had if I'd been an actress?

MAISIE. I see that we have nothing to say to each other that either of us can understand. Then let's be merciful and say nothing of what we think. This one fact remains. You are under contract to appear tomorrow in a play and I shall see that you are there!

SYDNEY. *(Steps below poudreuse)* And I shall see that she is not.

MAISIE. Do you realize what you are saying? You mean that this play will not open tomorrow night?

SYDNEY. Not with my wife!

DELIGHT. Maisie, the understudy can play it. She's much better than I am anyway. Don't worry about them, Maisie. They'll get along without me. *(Enter* STEPHEN R. *Crosses to below* R. *of sofa.)*

STEPHEN. Maisie, I've held that taxi for fifteen minutes——

MAISIE. Just a moment, Stephen. Now, you children, run along. I've a week's work to do here before tomorrow.

SYDNEY. Yes, we must go, Delight.

DELIGHT. Maisie, I'm sorry. I tried to make you see how I felt a week ago. I did try, Maisie.

MAISIE. I remember. I understand, Delight. Run along now. I'll see you later. You see how busy I am. *(*DELIGHT *makes a motion towards her mother as if to kiss her, and then draws back.)*

DELIGHT. *(Crosses* R.*)* I'm sorry, Maisie. *(Exeunt* SYDNEY *and* DELIGHT.*)*

MAISIE. And I dreamed of her with the world at her feet! *(Sits* L.C.*)*

STEPHEN. Maisie. *(Crosses to her.)* What's happened? Tell me.

MAISIE. She's married him. I've failed, Stephen.

STEPHEN. No, you haven't failed.

MAISIE. I've nothing left to live for.

STEPHEN. You have your own life to live, my dear.

MAISIE. I have no life outside of my children's lives.

STEPHEN. *(Down to her—*U.R. *of her)* The whole trouble was that they had no life outside of yours.

MAISIE. I guess you're right. But that doesn't make me any happier. I've lost them—I've lost them both. *WARN CURTAIN.*

STEPHEN. You can't lose your children, my dear.

MAISIE. I never had them. I just had dream children. I think this will kill me, Stephen. It has killed me, I believe. *(Enter* MISS HAMILTON, R. STEPHEN *rises, steps back.)*

MISS HAMILTON. *(Crosses to above poudreuse)* Mrs. Partridge, Mrs. Partridge, Madame La Fleur has just arrived.

STEPHEN. La Fleur——

MISS HAMILTON. Yes, Madame La Fleur. The boat docked early. She's here!

STEPHEN. *(A step to her)* Let me see her for you? I'll tell her you're ill——

MAISIE. La Fleur here!

LA FLEUR. *(Off* R.*)* Non. Je n'attendrai plus. *(Enter* CLEMENTINE R. *hurriedly, crosses to* MISS HAMILTON.*)*

MRS. PARTRIDGE PRESENTS

See Page 92

CLEMENTINE. She is coming in here! *(*MISS HAMILTON *draws* CLEMENTINE *to back* R. *of sofa.)*

LA FLEUR. *(Off* R.*)* C'est ridicule. Personne pour me rencontrer. Quelle reception. *(She comes inside the doorway* R.*)* Ah! Madame Partridge——

MAISIE. *(Rises)* Madame La Fleur, this is the happiest day of my life.

LA FLEUR. *(Crosses to her, shakes hands)* Je suis enchantée de vous voir. Quel amour de petite boutique—c'est si gentille! Regardez-moi ca les rideaux sont adorables. Les chapeaux——

CURTAIN

PROPERTY PLOT

Act I

2 Bookcases, against wall at back up R.
Dummy books, in bookcases.
1 pr. Window Curtains and tie backs at windows R.
1 pr. Glass Curtains on windows R.
1 Cushion in window seat.
2 Pillows on window seat.
1 Arm chair R.
1 Pillow in armchair R.
1 Drawing Board, on which a charcoa[1] drawing leaning against arm chair R.
1 Small smoking stand R. of arm chair R. on which, ash tray, stick of charcoal, eraser.
4 Drawings (charcoal) scattered on floor in front of arm chair R.
1 Side Chair below window R.
1 Barometer over chair, on wall below window R.
1 Bureau against wall under book cases up R. on which vase containing fall flowers.
1 Small Table against wall R. of fireplace, on which, lamp, ash tray, phone, box of matches.
1 Sofa, below table facing L. on which "Asia" magazine.
4 Poetry books on lower shelf of table.
1 "American" Magazine on lower shelf of table.
1 Needlepoint side chair below sofa.
1 Fire grate in which wood logs.
1 Fender before fireplace.
1 Oil Painting of man over fireplace.
1 pr. Brass and Glass Sconces either side of painting.

1 Red Lacquer Bench before fireplace, on which, ash tray, box of cigarettes.
1 Small Stool D.L.C.
1 Small Stand against wall L. of fireplace, on which, ash tray, box of cigarettes, box of matches.
1 Arm chair below stand L. of fireplace.
1 Chinese writing desk against wall at back U.L., on which, vase of fall flowers, bust.
On writing leaf of desk—picture of Delight in leather frame, blotter pad, pen rack containing pencil, inkwell, scratch pad.
In drawers of desk, "Lucy Stone" leaflet, dice box containing two dice.
1 pr. French Prints on wall either side of desk.
1 pr. Side Chairs against wall either side of desk.
1 Stool before desk.
1 Small table against wall below arch L., on which, 3 books, box of cigarettes, box of matches.
1 French Print on wall over table D.L.
1 Pr. Curtains to match those at window, in archway L. with tie backs.
1 Small table against wall in hall off L., over it mirror.
1 Ground cloth.

Hand props. *Off Left.*
For Stephen—N. Y. World, Women's Wear, Cable, Lease.
For Philip—Tobacco pouch filled with tobacco, pipe, box of cigarettes.
For Delight—Hair brush, Parcheesi board and box of counters.
For Maisie—Cigarette case filled with cigarettes, small week-end bag, letter.
For Ellen—Vase of fall flowers, part.
For Sydney—Cigarette case filled with cigarettes, matches, florist's box in which "Sun Set Roses."

PROPERTY PLOT

Act II

Same as Act I with following changes:

Strike—Drawings, all matches, change flowers in all three vases to spring flowers, pieces of lease, "Women's Wear," magazines, Parchesi board, men, and dice, "Lucy Stone" leaflet.
Reset—Stool, and bench.
Place—4 books under table R. of fireplace to sofa, tobacco pouch on window seat, 2 letters on writing leaf of desk.
Hand props. *Off Left.*
For Philip—Pipe, matches.
For Stephen—Business letters.
For Sydney—Marriage license.

PROPERTY PLOT

Act III

1 Ground cloth.
1 small side chair below arch R.
1 slipper chair R.C. facing D.R.
1 large sofa against back wall U.C.
1 large arm chair L.C. facing D.C.
1 small arm chair in corner U.L.
1 small side chair below window D.L., on which man's hat.
12 fancy hat boxes in cupboard U.R.C.
1 small fashion print on wall right of cupboard door.
2 small fashion prints on wall left of cupboard door.
2 small fashion prints on wall right of door U.L.C.
1 small fashion print on wall left of door U.L.C.
1 square of embroidery on wall over couch.

2 French prints on wall below window, over chair D.L.
1 pr. bolster pillows, one at either end of sofa.
1 pr. curtains and tie backs in arch R.
1 pr. glass curtains on windows L.
2 paper-mache display heads in recess of window L.
1 large painted tapestry on backing off R.

Hand props. *Off Up Left.*
For Maisie—Radiogram.
For Delight—Part in Play.
For Clementine—2 fancy dress boxes.
Off Right.
For Hamilton—Lady's handkerchiefs, curtains (1 pr.), for window L. to match those at arch R., and tie backs for same, man's visiting card.
For Philip—Small sketch book.
For Men—Powder table, step-ladder, hammer.

LIGHTING PLOT

Act I

At Rise:
Foots (Ratio of 3 white frost to 1 pink) ⅞ Up.
X-Ray Cir. 1. pink, ¾ Up.
Cir 2. white frost, Full.
Cir. 3. white frost, Full.
Spots in border, oiled amber, Baby.

No.	
1.	Full.
2.	Full.
3.	Full.
4.	Full.
5.	Out.

3.—1000w. Amber off R. shining throught widows R. Full.

Floods 1—1000w. White Frost on stand off R., shining on backing outside windows.
1—1000w. White Frost hanging over window R. shining on backing outside windows.
Strips 1—2 lights, amber, outside door off U.L.
1—2 lights, amber, below arch off D.L.
Lighting stands throughout the Act.

LIGHTING PLOT

Act II

Same as Act I.
Except—
Baby Spot in R. end of Foots, Pink Frost, to cover Maisie's face when sitting on stool. C.
On cue: ¾ Up.
One Cue: Down.

STAGE MANAGER'S CUES

At rise: Door closed, windows open.
Cue: At rise: Ready Door Bell.
Cue: Delight—I should say not. Door Bell.
Cue: Ellen—Plenty on my mind. Ready Door Slam.
Cue: Delight—Better listen to me. Door Slam.
Cue: Maisie—Lenox 2300. Ready spot up.
Cue: Delight—and hated you.
Maisie—Oh! (Sits.) Spot up.
Cue: So help me God! Ready Spot Down.
Cue: Maisie chose for yourself. Spot Down.
Cue: Stephen—it isn't possible. Ready Phone.
Cue: Stephen—into this play? Warn Curtain.
Cue: Maisie—Never, never, never! Phone.
Pause. Phone.
Pause. Phone.
Cue: Thank God, I've saved her! Curtain.

LIGHTING PLOT

Act III

At Rise: Foots. Same as Act I.
X-Ray. Same as Act I.
Spots. In border, Baby.
Nos.
1. Full.
2. Full.
3. Out.
4. Full.
5. Full.
Floods—2-1000w. White Frost on stands off L. shining directly on windows.
Strips—1-2 light strip, amber, outside of door U.L.C.
Lighting stands throughout the act.

STAGE MANAGER'S CUES

At Rise: Doors of cupboard closed, door U.L.C. closes.
Cue: Maisie—I've lost them both. Warn Curtain.
Cue: La Fleur—quelle amour de petite boutique—
Curtain.

Act I

At Rise:
Door closed. Windows closed.
Cue: Ellen—over them drawings. Ready phone.
Cue: Ellen—caught dead in. Phone.
Pause.
Ellen—answer the phone? Phone.
Cue: Philip—is he, an acrobat? Ready Door Bell.
Cue: Delight—I think I live in? Door Bell.
Cue: Philip—to regret it. Ready Phone.
Cue: Philip—get over that. Phone.

Cue: Maisie—twice as expensive. Ready Door Bell.
Cue: Maisie—I know you can fix it. Door Bell.
Cue: Delight—only Sydney Armstead. Ready phone.
Cue: Philip—Katy, must you go? Phone.
Ready Door Bell.
Cue: Katy—be slaughtered anyway. Door Bell.
Cue: Katy—dying to see him. Door Bell.
Cue: Delight—A sketch. Ready Phone.
Cue: Delight—in front of Sydney? Phone.
Cue: Maisie—twelve last night. Ready Door Bell.
Cue: Delight—an extra collar. Door Bell.
Cue: Delight—up for any man. Warn Curtain.
Cue: Maisie—Armstrong, take the bag. (Sydney gives her a surprised glance. Curtain.